



EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT
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Lady Godiva's fig leaf

The Coventry agreement is a triumph for Mr John Peartman and for the National Union of Teachers. In this sense, then, it is a triumph for the old guard in Burnham, with the National Association of School Masters/Union of Women Teachers reverting to its traditional role on the sidelines.

Two questions arise: is it a good deal for the teachers, and is it a good deal for the schools – that is, the pupils?

The cost is of the order of £3 billion over five years, and rather more than this over the 10 years which it will take for the merging of scales which will now form the Main Professional Grade to take place. If it were possible to reduce £3 billion over five years to a simple £600 million a year on the salary bill, it would represent a rise of about 12 per cent over all. There will be other consequential costs arising from the details of the contract.

The weighting of the package favours those now on the lower scales. If this goes through someone entering the MPG will be guaranteed a minimum of £14,500 at the end of 10 years. This compares with the £10,533 which is the most which an unrepresented Scale 1 teacher can now look forward to.

On the other hand, a senior teacher who transfers to the top of the MPG scale and receives on top of that the £2,000 principal teacher's allowance, would end up with £16,500, which is only a modest £1,170 above the present top of the senior teacher's scale.

The teachers who now hold posts of responsibility, especially those in the ranks immediately below the deputies, seem to have done unconsciously badly. Why this should be so is not clear. It is true that they are relatively few in number and have no big

battalions behind them, but the local authorities should have looked after their interests even if the unions let them down, because they include many key figures in the schools. The heads and deputies have done a bit better, but could hardly be said to have fared well: they, too, bear heavy responsibility and it is certainly wrong to weight the formula against them.

It is quite clear that Mr Kenneth Baker will dislike the narrowing of differentials and question whether this is in the interest of the pupils. The DES has consistently favoured the idea of increasing rewards at the top rather than reducing the heads' relative position. Mr Baker will quite properly be reluctant to connive in the indulgence of the NUT's traditional desire for a strong basic scale, at the expense of those who occupy positions of responsibility.

The agreement owes a great deal to the guidance and encouragement of the three wise men and the professional skill of Acs in the background. There remains a lot to do: what has been signed is only the Heads of Agreement. This commits the signatories to completing detailed negotiations on various matters by the end of the year. There are negotiations to finish off about the number of days over which teachers should expect to provide for absent colleagues. There are also outstanding matters to clear up about non-contact time and maximum class size, both of which could prove expensive and contentious. Mindful of the failure of Burnham I:2 to deliver promises made last year, Mr Baker is going to be extremely reluctant to take these matters on trust. There will have to be more progress before he gets out his cheque book.

The Secretary of State could regard this Acs settlement as the basis of peace in the schools and a return to normalcy – albeit normalcy governed by a new contract, not the old conventions of good will. But does it do enough to guarantee better management and more discipline on the part of the teachers? Does it guarantee that Sir Keith Joseph's plaintive demands will be met?

The first answer is that there can be no guarantees of good behaviour just because there is a new contract and a new pay settlement. The recent trouble was about pay – if teachers' pay is screwed down in the future, there will again be industrial action and teachers will break their contracts, as they have done in the past. The only difference will be that the new contract will mean that local authorities would have less compunction in stopping teachers' pay. Teachers' disputes would cost the unions (or their members) a lot more if this goes through.

This said, a settlement along these lines – which still seems far from generous – probably could usher in a period of stability, at least till 1990 when, under paragraph 19 of the Heads of Agreement, another "fundamental review" will be due. The Secretary of State will get his long-delayed appraisal pilot project and this should lead on to a fully-fledged scheme in due course. Always provided, that is, that he can afford to pay for it.

In the end it comes down to this. Can Mr Kenneth Baker summon up the money (or rather, his 47 per cent of it)? Three thousand million pounds over five years is well within the range being discussed by Ministers in the DES. Can the Cabinet be persuaded to back it? The weighting of the offer at the bottom end must make this difficult.

COMMENT

No food for thought

There are legitimate grounds for argument as to whether the costs of school meals should be borne by the education service, or come out of the social welfare budget.

Needless to say, however, that this is not being addressed in the current war of attrition against midday meals provision; nor is there any semblance of a joint policy – unless it be that financial expedience rules.

If further evidence of that judgement were needed, it came last week. First, there was the new Social Security Act (page 3), which made its contribution to social insecurity by ending the free school meals entitlement of half a million children, and second, the Buckinghamshire education authority's decision to save £2 million by restricting school meals to a hard core of needs cases.

The original arguments for low cost school meals which go back to before the First World War, were nutritional. Reinforced more recently in the Court and Black reports of the past decade, that *raison d'être* can hardly be said to have gone away in the face of last week's publication of the worst poverty figures this century – nearly one in three people are now living on or about the poverty line, a jump from 11.5 million to 16.3 million between 1979 and 1983.

If that statistic puts the ball back in the DHSS court, there remains the indisputable evidence that the schools can guarantee a child from a poor home one nourishing meal each school day, which is more than can be ensured by adding a small amount to the Gini cheque.

In any case, some of the consequences of the new social security legislation will fall upon local education authorities. First with cutting their school meal service on a different

Principles and consistency have been flying out of the window ever since an earlier round of legislation began to cut the L.E.A.'s obligation to provide school meals. Now, in Buckinghamshire only those getting free meals will get meals at all, so there will be no escaping the public stigma.

Shifting the emphasis to the majority who might be expected to bear the cost of feeding their own children properly does not remove the need to consider the consequences for school management when a meals service is cut back drastically.

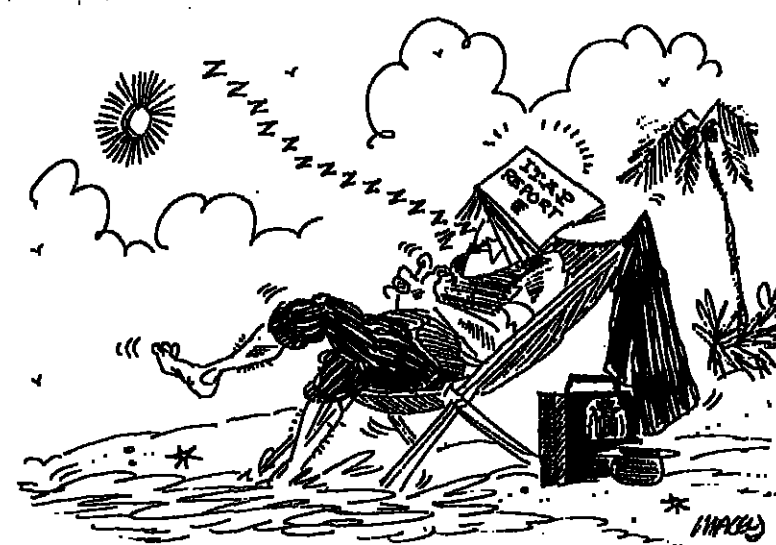
Any other authority which ceases to provide meals for most of its pupils, without removing the midday break, faces supervision problems that will hardly be welcome to teachers or – especially – heads. Oversight of packed lunches is not cost or trouble-free; nor is the thorny issue of responsibility for hungry hordes turned loose on local shops or takeaways.

It must be tempting to think that if you abolish school meals, the argument about who you pay for supervision (and how much) will go away. It won't. Meanwhile more undernourished children are likely to fall through the gaps between departments.

Sound sense from ITAP

If there is one type of proposal which usually guarantees a yawn from Ministers and most of all from the Prime Minister, it is a plea for a commission of inquiry into some major matter of public policy. Ministers, and Mrs Thatcher in particular, regard commissions of inquiry as effete, time-wasting devices which start looking for consensus and long-term agreement instead of allowing Ministers (and most of all Prime Ministers) to get the credit for imposing their own, abrasive, short-term, politically-orthodox solutions.

This being the case, it is not possible to rate particularly highly the chances



of the Information Technology Advisory Panel, a group set up by the Prime Minister to advise her on information technology, persuading the Government that now is the time to set up a broad-based commission to "consider the educational system which this country will need for the next century".

The ITAP proposal, set out in *Learning to Live with IT* (page 5), suggests various ways in which new information technology can, should and must affect education, and how it could be used to improve the access of members of the community to education at all levels and all stages of their lives.

It makes all the usual ritual denials of any assault on the professionalism or central role of teachers. But taken together with well-known facts about the persistent shortage of teachers of science, technology and mathematics, the report clearly has in mind the need to transform the situation by exploiting the available educational technology, using the powerful possibilities of video-disc linked to computer programs and the full resources of the communications industry.

The long and the short of it is that ITAP is right. It would be an excellent thing to set up, the kind of inquiry it suggests and to do it now so that a

couple of years from now there would be a major policy document on which to base the planned development of a life-long system of teaching and learning. The possibilities of educational technology (including the commercial possibilities, before which ITAP dutifully genuflects) are only going to be fully realized if there is a thorough and far-sighted review of policy, and coherent strategic decisions.

Such decisions mean making choices. The normal tendency in this country is to avoid the choices and let a thousand, often contradicting options, exist side by side. Real progress is possible through what is revolutionary technology, but only if, collectively, Britain gets it right and the first step must be a grand policy inquiry of the kind now proposed.

no comment

"Apart from the bad language, there are quite a few words that you would need to look up in the dictionary to understand."

Parent urging removal of Kurt Vonnegut novel from curriculum and library of Northamptonshire school. *Rugby Advertiser*, 17 July.

Second opinion

WASPs among the honey-bees?

It was with great interest that I read your report about a document circulated for consultation within the Society of Education Officers – known as the Bramley Grange paper. The paper is scathing about the SEO not being outspoken enough on issues relating to education funding, staffing, and the role of local government officers. Senior officers have also been accused of keeping important information from themselves – nothing astonishing in this access to information is the key to the corridors of power.

Women members of the SEO have also claimed that the society is "male dominated and patronizing to women". I am not surprised that the case at the SEO, though a criticism is welcome as I am sure, will initiate a change for the better. Since the paper was written, Bramley Grange has been appointed director of education at Walsall – the only woman director in England and Wales.

What I felt was disappointing about the Bramley Grange paper was that allusion was made to the WASPs (white Anglo-Saxon Protestants) values that appear to continue to dominate the thinking and philosophy of the SEO. Black officers are conspicuous by their absence in the SEO and hardly any time and space are given to the consideration of issues such as education for a multicultural democracy or racism, whether or not it estimates particular pockets of Britain.

There is no doubt that the SEO is a heavyweight professional voice in the country to which the Secretary of State and the Department of Education and Science pay careful attention. This is all the more reason why the SEO has a duty to examine all its shortcomings as it does have a radical influence on the local educational authorities and the pupils for which it is responsible.

The race industry in different parts of Britain has been accused of many things, chief among them the accusation that anyone white is a racist, whether aware of it or not. Regrettably, this view ignores the reality of practice in this country of treating people as innocent unless proved guilty and ignores the fact that racism is found in the most unlikely places.

I will never forget the occasion when a relative of mine (I am of Asian origin) once said that she would like to move house as the area in which she was living was being flooded by Asians. Her brother reminded her that, to whichever district she moved, there would be at least one Asian living in the area – herself.

But to revert to the SEO and its policies: the society is dominated by members who happen to be white officers in local authorities around the country. It should draw up an action plan encouraging L.E.A.s not only to monitor their recruitment policies but also to ensure that women and blacks are not discriminated against in the institutions that have been working for centuries, but also to take part in positive initiatives that will improve the life chances of these two groups in our society.

The SEO has responded amazingly to the Swann report, but has been just one instance where the placed the black issue on its agenda and that too, was just a "reaction" to another's initiative. In other educational circles, the SEO has been described variously as another "reaction" or an offshoot of the Swann report, needs to pay more heed to the Swann report. It can ignore the Swann report at its own peril.

David Sassoon is assistant chief officer (schools administration) in the London borough of Brent. His opinions expressed are his own and not necessarily those of the authority.

Jeremy Sutcliffe reports on the continuing attack on school dinners

Bucks slashes school meals to save £2 million

Buckinghamshire has become the first education authority in the country to end school meals provision in both primary and secondary schools, with the loss of 1,700 jobs.

The meals service for 1,700 children in 19 special schools will be continued and packed lunches will be provided for 8,000 children entitled to free school meals.

The cuts will enable the council to reduce its spending on school meals from £5.4 million to £3.4 million.

Only 100 of the L.E.A.'s 1,800 school meals staff will be kept on to run the packed lunches service. The authority is also considering ways of offering packed lunches for sale to pupils.

Last session about a third of the county's 90,000 schoolchildren took school lunches, which cost 75p. The leader of the Conservative-controlled council, Mr Francis Robinson, claims the new packed lunches will be more nutritious than traditional school meals. At present, the food content value of a school meal is about 30p, but the reduction in cuts will enable the council to increase that to 40p, Mr Robinson said.

Mr Colin Clark, divisional officer of the National Union of Public Employees, described the decision as "cruel and heartless". He said the council should have waited for a report on children's nutritional needs – currently being prepared by Buckinghamshire's three health authorities – to be published.

He also claimed the abolition of school meals would encourage children to roam town centres.

A spokesman for the county council said the £2 million savings would accrue to the council as a whole, but because 70 per cent of its budget went on education at least that much would go back into the service. It is expected that the money will be spent on providing school buildings in rapidly expanding Milton Keynes, and in restoring cuts in the capitalisation allowance.

Other L.E.A.s which have reduced school meals provision in recent years include Lincolnshire and Dorset, which no longer provide meals for primary children.

The London borough of Merton became the first L.E.A. to privatize its meals service in 1983.

Costly Bill for the service . . .

School meals services in England and Wales face an uncertain future as a result of the Social Security Bill, according to a leading local government official.

"The school meals service has always been under threat in the present climate of economic cuts, and this will make its future even more insecure," said Mr Dugald MacInnes, principal education administrator for the Association of County Councils.

Mr MacInnes was commenting on the inclusion in the Bill, which received the Royal Assent last week, of plans to end the free school meals entitlement of more than 500,000 children from low-income families.

Both the ACC and the Association of Metropolitan Authorities have already told the Government of their concern about the possible consequences of the school meals clause.

"If we are to be encouraged to run an efficient and economic service then taking away some of the clients is hardly going to help that process," Mr MacInnes said.

"Our own view is that when a lower-income family is in funds then



Derek Fatchett

Johnny or Sarah will be given their 60p a day for a school meal. When they are not, then that might well be one of the things that go."

"At least with the present system you know children are going to turn up for school meals and kitchens can budget for providing so many meals a day."

The new regulations, to be introduced from 1988, will affect more than 190,000 children whose parents receive family income supplement to top up low wages, and 320,000-plus who receive free meals at the discretion of local education authorities.

NEWS



Three authorities no longer provide meals for primary children.

Two nations highlighted

Under the Bill, 860,000 children will continue to receive free meals because their parents are on supplementary benefit.

At present, two out of three L.E.A.s in England and Wales use their discretionary powers, to the benefit of children whose parents do not qualify for family income supplement but who nevertheless come from poor families.

An estimated 610,000 children from low-income families will instead receive an average £2.20 a week under a new benefit, "family credit", which will replace family income supplement. This will be paid throughout the year, not just during term-time.

The new regulations were condemned by Labour MP Mr Derek Fatchett (Leeds Central) who made an unsuccessful attempt to amend a clause on school meals in the Education Bill during its final reading in the House of Commons.

He claimed the new regulations would jeopardize many of the 350,000 jobs provided by the school meals service. Any cut in school meals provision would lead more pupils to eat junk food at lunchtimes, he said.

New evidence of the north-south divide is contained in education statistics published this week by the Government's Central Statistical Office.

The figures, set out in the office's annual *Regional Trends* survey, show that more than one in four children (25.4 per cent) in the north receive free school meals, the highest percentage in mainland Britain.

Only Northern Ireland has a higher percentage receiving free meals (28 per cent). The north-west has the third highest figure (24.5 per cent), followed by Yorkshire and Humberside (23.5 per cent), and Wales (22.8 per cent).

In contrast, just over one in 10 children in East Anglia (10.9 per cent) receive free meals, followed by the south-east (12.2 per cent) and the south-west (12.4 per cent).

Regional Trends 21, 1986, is published by HMSO and available from government bookshops and booksellers, price £17.50.

Grants review in sight

Consultations on the future of the student grant system begin this month when Mr George Walden, Minister for Higher Education, formally asks all interested parties for their views.

Mr Walden is chairing an internal government review of student support, announced by Mr Kenneth Baker, the Education Secretary, in June.

It is now widely accepted that the present system of student grants cannot continue, and that some sort of mixed grant-loan package is likely to be announced next year.

University vice-chancellors, who have been examining such schemes in detail for several years, now appear to favour a two-year grant, one-year loan scheme, although their final deliberations are likely to take place after they meet in Edinburgh this September. Some critics are strongly opposed to the scheme because they fear it could encourage the growth of two-year degree courses.

Politechnic directors are divided in their views, and are still scrutinizing possible options. However, they share a

concern that an ever-expanding student grants bill should not be allowed to divert money away from higher education needs. A spokesman for the Department of Education and Science said this week that the views of parents on student support would be welcomed, although there was no representative body which could be formally asked for their views.

The number of students receiving grants has grown almost six times since the present national system was introduced in 1961, and the grants bill now comes to more than £1 billion.

In May Mr Christopher Ball, chairman of the board of the National Advisory Body, argued in a personal paper for a two-year grant, one-year loan scheme.

A guide to the student grant rates applied from next month has been published by the Department of Education and Science. *Grants to Students: a brief guide 1986-87* is available free from the Publications Despatch Centre, Honeyopt Lane, Canons Park, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 1AZ.

Thin blue line fades away

A slim blue volume with a less than eye-catching cover picture of primary science pupils slipped out this week masquerading as an everyday educational publication. Hilary Wilce writes.

But the Department of Education and Science's *Annual Report 1985* is the last yearly round-up of the comings and goings at Elizabeth House, and as such is due to become an historic document.

No more will the world be told every 12 months of major educational progress ("No agreement had been reached by the end of the year in the salary rates and allowances for school teachers . . ."), of progress on pressing social problems ("Various measures were announced during the year to raise ethnic minority pupils' achievements generally"), and the travels of ministers ("Mr Dunn visited Finland between 2-5 September to have talks with the Finnish Minister of Culture").

There will be no more annual digest of grammar school numbers, parliamentary publications, which schools suffered the tortuous prose of HM Inspectors, or the number of staff at the DES.

Section 49(1) of the Education Bill, due to become law in the autumn, repeals Section 5 of the 1944 Education Act and ends the Secretary of State's duty to make an annual report to Parliament. And among the many contentious "miscellaneous provisions" this is one section that no one seems inclined to challenge.

Department of Education and Science, *Annual Report 1985*, HMSO, £6.50.

IN BRIEF

Bus pass ruling

The House of Lords is expected to rule in October whether Essex County Council was right not to provide free transport for a girl whose route to school involved walking a lonely track. Earlier this year, the Court of Appeal supported the parents of 13-year-old Shirley Rogers, who had insisted she should have a bus pass for her journey to school. The authority claims the "nearest available" route for the girl falls 106 yards short of the qualifying three-mile minimum for free travel. The county council's appeal hearing to the Law Lords finished this week.

Kidnap memorial

A memorial service is to be held at 2pm today at St Martin-in-the-Fields church, London, for Mr Leigh Douglas and Mr Philip Padfield, two British teachers killed in the Lebanon after being kidnapped by Arab extremists. Mr Terry White, the Archbishop of Canterbury's special envoy, will give the address.

Child charity

A new charity, Childline, has been set up to provide a telephone link for youngsters or adults to report cases of child abuse. It will be able to call on support from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the National Children's Home, and social services departments.

Consumer call

The House of Lords Select Committee on the European Communities has called for consumer education right through primary and secondary curricula. The National Consumer Council, whose 1983 report showed that practical education on rights was severely lacking in most secondary schools, has welcomed the proposal.

Family planning

The Government is to mount a campaign to reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies among the under-25s. Health authorities are being asked to run family planning and counselling drives for young women.

Shortage alert

The chairman of the Engineering Council, Sir Francis Tomba, has warned that the shortage of school maths and physics teachers is leading to a fall in applications for university engineering places which will create serious long-term problems for Britain.

Free for all

The Co-operative Bank is offering all 15 to 22-year-olds – not only students – a £10 voucher if they open an account by October, as well as free banking and other perks. Alternatively, young people can nominate a charity to which the bank will donate the "free gift".

Professional Association of Teachers

WHAT EVERY TEACHER NEEDS TO KNOW

PAT is the most rapidly growing teachers' union in the United Kingdom. Its membership increased by 12,000 in 1985. In 1986, there has been a further increase in membership of several thousands.

PAT is responsible for the referral of the 1985/86 dispute on teachers' pay to ACAS and is committed to establishing professional conditions of service and professional levels of salary.

PAT has shown it is possible to advance teachers' interests without harming pupils' education.

PAT is not allied to any party political group and has parliamentary consultants and advisers in the Conservative, Labour and Alliance sectors. If you wish to join PAT, all you need do is write to the following address (no stamp required):

Professional Association of Teachers
FREEPOST
Department EW
88 Frier Gate
Derby DE1 9BR

(0787)

PLATFORM



Government policy should be directed towards improving inner city school life for all pupils and not about schemes, such as Assisted Places, which transfers the few into the independent sector



Inner city quality

Demitri Coryton Argyropulo argues that the local education authorities must be the main engine for change, and should not be by-passed by devolution or privatization schemes

This week sees more Government initiatives in the inner cities aimed at increasing employment. It also sees the publication of the Information Technology Advisory Panel report criticizing schools in outdated and inadequate for a technology-based society. Whatever problems there are in education, the difficulties are often greatest in the urban centres. It is here, where the quality of education so often reflects the quality of life in general, that most problems schools exist.

Tackling the educational problems of the inner cities is something close to the heart of Kenneth Baker, the new Education Secretary, who started his political life in the East End of London. He has received a lot of advice recently on how he should go about this. A number of schemes have been floated from various quarters, from privatizing education to centralizing it, which look at the inner cities as an ideal testing ground.

From direct grant primary schools through vouchers to "Crown" schools, the depressing fact about so many of these ideas, as with the Assisted Places Scheme, is that they do nothing to improve the quality of education in the schools that the vast majority of young people are educated in. These schemes all help most those children with parents best able to play the system to escape from poor schools. They do nothing for the quality of education of the majority who remain behind. The objective of Government policy should not be to design better escape routes for the few, but to improve all schools so that people will not want to escape from them in the first place.

The supporters of the voucher would claim that their scheme would improve standards across the board by forcing poor schools to close as fewer and fewer parents chose to send their children to them. But what of the children who remain while this process unfolds over several years? They are the very ones who are likely to need help the most, and cannot be abandoned simply because of lack of parental ability or interest.

As Chris Patten, Education Minister of State, has pointed out, vouchers or credits can never operate in a free market in any case, for three reasons. First, the consumer cannot decide not to consume the product, at least not between the ages of 5 and 16. Second, the provider cannot be allowed to charge what the market will bear. Schooling has to be available free of charge to parents. Third, the consumer cannot be allowed to accept a shoddy service. The national interest requires a minimum standard at least.

The whole concept of privatizing education is sheer escapism. Devolving ways of treating education as if it were a trading concern in a free market is simply an excuse for not tackling the real and difficult problems of improving a precious public service.

A recent pamphlet by a group of right-wing Tory MPs put forward a combination of nationalization and devolution. Rejecting vouchers and the Assisted Places Scheme, they call for parent-dominated school boards to run schools directly funded by the

DES, thus cutting out the L.E.A.s. To a limited extent, this echoes some of Sir Keith Joseph's thinking. He put great store by parent power and the beneficial effects of parent dominated school governors being given more power. Kenneth Baker, who insists that he is not centralist, talks about devolving power from the hub of the wheel to the rim. By the rim he means the schools and not the L.E.A.s. All these views reflect a sense of frustration and lack of confidence in L.E.A.s that spreads right across the Conservative Parliamentary Party. Many Tory MPs seem to overlook the good work done in the majority of local authorities.

The present Education Bill reflects this thinking. It will actually make it more difficult for L.E.A.s to do their job. It would be nice if parent-dominated governing bodies really could turn education around, but the reality is rather different. This is particularly true in the inner cities, where parents are less likely to have the inclination or ability to get involved in the way the Government hopes.

While parental involvement is highly desirable and to be encouraged, it is

only part of the answer. If more authority is to be devolved to schools, then it is the head whose position must be strengthened as well. Government initiatives like CPVE and TVEI are very important, and L.E.A.s should not act so stupidly as the Inner London Education Authority did in turning down TVEI money as ideologically tainted. The expansion of TVEI will enhance employment chances, and should be embraced by all L.E.A.s.

While there is much that central government can and should do, there are also limits. Britain is already overcentralized, and the last thing the country needs is Whitehall running the nation's schools. The DES should also resist the temptation of running a few super, or "Crown", schools.

It is undoubtedly true that in many inner city areas bright children from poor families are not getting the best education they could. In some schools it is not only bright children that are being short changed.

The answer is not to extract small numbers of children into a few well funded "centres of excellence" financed directly from the DES, in the hopes that good practice will trickle

down to the less well funded multi-tenanted schools who will still enter for most children. As recent reports from the Information Technology Advisory Panel and the OECD have shown, the problems that schools must overcome in the future are not confined to improving the academic performance of a few bright children.

The L.E.A.s have the central role to play. They must be the engines of improvement. There are far too many schools for the DES and HMI to do the job on their own. That means L.E.A.s must get their priorities right and concentrate on initiatives like ILEA's Hargreaves report and pupil profiling, more from their children. As Patten once said, children tend to live up to or down to, that which is expected of them. A child's background should not be an excuse for unacceptably low expectations.

Even in areas of high unemployment, the importance of getting a job should still be a motivating force. As the MSC's "National Cohort Study" published last month showed, 40 per cent of those who left school with no exam passes were unemployed a year later. Only 10 per cent of those with at least one pass pass at 16 were in the same position. If education is to make a real contribution to improving the quality of life in Britain's most deprived areas, then Government policy must continue to be based on a partnership between all three levels of education. Government initiatives like TVEI and CPVE should be used to the full.

Inner city L.E.A.s must get their priorities right, and put all their efforts into improving secondary schools in particular. It is not just a matter of improving exam scores, though these are important for life in our inner cities as important as anything else, and the stress city L.E.A.s have on race is justified even if the pressure authorities have gone about it in some times counter-productive.

Many of the various schemes put forward as advice to the new Secretary of State may well be interesting. If the education system to everyone in the inner cities is to be improved, there is no substitute for hard work of concentrating, in partnership with L.E.A.s and schools, on the mainstream of education.

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May's Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy report on performance indicators in education also covers useful ground.

The outcome of the teacher's dispute will be as important in the cities anywhere else. Given the greater degree of teacher militancy in inner urban areas like inner London, where all too often the L.E.A.s have abandoned their staff management responsibilities, a deal that includes clear conditions of service agreement is essential. While this teacher militancy has undoubtedly harmed children, it is fair to say that much good work has been carried on as well, sometimes in the same militancy who have caused disruption at other times.

Resources are obviously important, but they are not everything. In Labour, which has controlled inner urban Britain for decades, there is a real psychological problem in admitting that there is anything wrong that simply spending more money will cure. Reaching out to motivating material in the house is a buck of the conflagration pack is not just about spending money.

As HMI reports have shown, teachers must be encouraged to expect more from their children. As Patten once said, children tend to live up to or down to, that which is expected of them. A child's background should not be an excuse for unacceptably low expectations.

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Inner city L.E.A.s must get their priorities right, and put all their efforts into improving secondary schools in particular. It is not just a matter of improving exam scores, though these are important for life in our inner cities as important as anything else, and the stress city L.E.A.s have on race is justified even if the pressure authorities have gone about it in some times counter-productive.

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Smalls talk

Last weekend's talks in Coventry on teachers' pay were scheduled to last from 11 o'clock on Friday morning till 10 o'clock on Saturday night. Off by midnight on Saturday, most people thought. But, as the talks dragged on and Saturday became Sunday, the participants' freshness of mind and body began to wane. What is worse, supplies of underwear began to run short. Come Monday morning, however, all was rectified by a trip to the local branch of Marks and Sparks, whose sales figures may show an unexpected blip. One of those caught out by the length of the negotiations was a Miss Barbara Smith who works for Acsa, the conciliation service under whose auspices the talks were being held. Miss Smith, who lives in Birmingham, was telephoned on Friday afternoon to ask if she would mind popping over to Coventry to help out for an hour or two. At breakfast time on Tuesday, she was still there. Let's hope she is paid at time-and-a-half.

Long shot

The pay talks were meant to be secret (they were held in Coventry, after all). Imagine, then, the surprise of Phillip Meridale, a member of the Burnham employers' panel, on finding a Tory councillor from Cumbria, who had nothing to do with the talks, slipping a drink in the bar late one night in Coventry. He and his wife had just been on holiday and fancied a weekend break in Coventry. Explained the Cumbrian somewhat sheepishly.

Well-read Ken

Sir Keith Joseph always used to start a speech by asking his audience how many of them were teachers. Hands would go up as the assembled throng responded somewhat grudgingly to the minister's little ice-breaker. Kenneth Baker has a different ploy. A keen book-collector, he always refers to the excellence of a bookshop he has managed to find in the city where he is making the speech. Thus it was at the recent Council of Local Education Authorities conference in Coventry, where he was warm in his praise of the local antiquarian jewel.

This wheedled the courtesy of Bob Morris, the bearded education officer of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, and no mean book-collector himself. He was stuck in Coventry a week later during the pay marathon and went off to have a look. But try as he might, he could find nothing to tempt him on the dusty shelves of Marxist and Trotskyite tracts of the shops in question.

Swell-letters

Those who think their headteacher's handwriting is indecipherable, and the legible communication has to come through the means of his or her secretary's typewriter, had better think again. The autumn Head Teachers' Review, edited by David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, is running a good handwriting competition for members, with a first prize of a two-week cruise. Apparently, the standard of calligraphy among heads is already so high that their letters are a pleasure to receive. Entrants have to submit no more than 14 lines of their favourite poetry, prose or composition, written in any style they choose.

Call to the bars

And, from the Department of Apt Sciences... the secretary to the Chief Prison Education Officer at the Home Office is called Mrs Holloway.

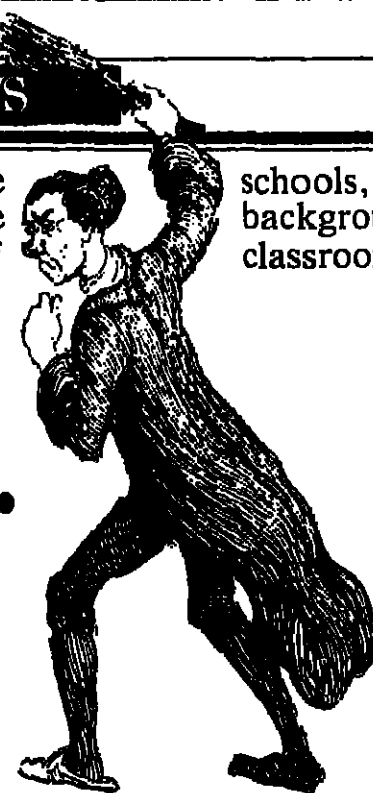
Acronym

The Commission for Racial Equality

NEWS

With the demise of caning in state of the legislation against the towards other forms of

So the beating had to stop... but at what price?



MPs debating corporal punishment last week were long on rhetoric about its iniquities but short on practical ideas to replace it.

Even Mr Martin Flannery, (Labour, Hillsborough) and a former NUT executive member with many years in the classroom, could prescribe no more for the playground bully than that he was a problem "we have to think carefully about."

Over the past six years, as the anti-caning movement has gathered momentum, teachers have repeatedly complained that their employers have decided against caning with no thought of the extra resources required.

A working party of the Derbyshire authority concluded five years ago that a ban on corporal punishment would add 5 per cent to the teaching salary bill, or between £5 million and £6 million this year for larger authorities.

Smaller classes certainly reduce discipline - but they are not guaranteed to eliminate it. It is all very well to say that the good teacher is rarely troubled by unruly pupils - most teachers are not in that class. They are honest journeymen who have learned a trade and practise it competently. But as long as children are compelled by law to go to school, those teachers troubled by unruly pupils - most teachers are not in that class. They are honest journeymen who have learned a trade and practise it competently.

Many alternatives to the cane are already in use up and down the country. Suspension, perhaps leading to expulsion, is regularly exercised. But Poundsworth has shown what can happen if employers outside the classroom ride roughshod over the feelings of teachers who have to work inside it. Detentions and exclusion from the class for a fixed period in a sanctuary or "sin-bin" are commonplace.

Perhaps the nearest thing to innova-

tion in recent years has been the principle of involving the pupils' parents at an early stage. Some schools ask them to come in the day after the misdemeanour and set great store by this approach.

This is really no more than exploiting a pupil's relationship with another adult, who in some schools may also be the head. When a pupil misbehaves in the class of a teacher he sees only once a week, he may be referred to his form tutor. If that does not work then referral continues to the year tutor and even beyond to the deputy head.

All sanctions other than corporal punishment are time-consuming, particularly for senior staff. Shortly after the Strasbourg judgment, this was put with refreshing candour by Mr Gordon Jamieson, a delegate to the NAS/UWT conference that year: "I don't believe we are talking about a moral issue. Corporal punishment is cheap and it is easy to administer." There was more than one "hear, hear".

A county court judge ruled this week that an independent school head used reasonable force when caning a pupil.

Parents of a former pupil at Brighton College lost their claim for £5,000 damages against the head, Mr William Blackshaw. The boy was alleged to have bullied a younger pupil and damaged one of his school files.

After the hearing Mr Blackshaw reaffirmed his belief in corporal punishment and his intention to continue using it.

More than three-quarters of governing bodies in the London borough of Ealing have agreed to a council proposal to abolish corporal punishment from the start of next term. Only six out of 62 boards of governors responding voted against abolition.

schools, Bert Lodge sets the history background of a general movement classroom punishment

The force of an idea whose time has come

If it is true that there is nothing so invincible as an idea whose time has come, then corporal punishment in schools would soon have disappeared, without the House of Commons decision last week.

In the early 1970s there were reports of individual schools deciding to throw away the cane. Perhaps the foundation of STOPP - the Society of Teachers Opposed to Physical Punishment - was the first sign of the impending wind of change.

By 1980 the group claimed that 20 per cent of schools had abandoned this form of sanction. In 1981 Lancashire, one of the largest authorities, voted to phase out the cane over the next two years. But it was the historic judgment of the European Court of Human Rights the following year that pupils could not be physically punished if their parents objected, which turned the trickle into a steady stream.

The following month, the annual conference of the National Union of Teachers voted to campaign for abolition. The Scottish Education Department told authorities to start implementing the Strasbourg judgment immediately, though Strathclyde and Lothian had already decided to abolish corporal punishment altogether.

Leicestershire and Newcastle soon followed and every few months another Labour-controlled authority would join them.

By the time the Government attempted to incorporate the Strasbourg judgment into British law with the Education (Corporal Punishment) Bill in January last year, 16 education authorities had declared themselves abolitionist and a further 50 were considering it.

The Bill required schools to compile a register of pupils whose parents did not mind their child being caned. But

the absurdity of dividing a whole school into the beatables and the unbeatable alienated the educational world. The Opposition jeered and it was left to the House of Lords to get the Government out of its misery by wrecking the Bill's chances.

By the time the issue came before the Commons again last week, corporal punishment had been abolished in 34 authorities out of 125, including those in Scotland.

According to STOPP, of these remaining 84 allow physical punishment to take place in primary schools and 87 in sixth-forms. Even handicapped pupils are not exempt in 77 authorities. In 80 the punishment can be in public and in 60 male teachers can cane girls while 89 allow women teachers to cane boys.

The issue was raised in the form of an amendment to the Education Bill now going through Parliament. The amendment, moved by Tory backbencher, Mr James Pawsey, (Rugby and Kenilworth), would have removed the clause to abolish corporal punishment that had been inserted by the wish of the House of Lords.

But the Commons decided, by one vote, to endorse the Lords' clause. This will lay teachers in state schools open to legal action for battery if they inflict corporal punishment on a pupil. The only defence will be if a teacher was acting to avert immediate injury or damage to a person or property. The new law will come into force throughout the United Kingdom in mid-August 1987.

Because it only affects pupils paid for by the state, the Bill will create an anomaly. The 22,000 pupils in independent schools on the Assisted Places Scheme will not be legally eligible for caning, while their classmates will.

Bradford shows the way on race data

by Geraldine Hackett

Bradford is one of the few education authorities collecting information on pupils' ethnic origin in the way sought by the Government.

Mr Kenneth Baker, the Education Secretary, announced in the Commons last week that he had decided L.E.A.s should collect statistics on ethnic minority pupils and would be consulting them on how it should be done.

Collecting statistics on race was stopped by the Department of Education in the 1970s when Mrs Margaret Thatcher was Secretary of State. But a working party set up to look at the issue, in the wake of the Swann report, which noted the lack of statistics on the ethnic origin of pupils and teachers, has recommended schools should collect such figures.

Bradford schools have kept complete records of pupils' ethnic origin since 1983. The authority uses six classifications, with each pupil coded from information provided by parents. The records allow Bradford to relate academic performance to racial origin and to direct resources to schools.

A quarter of Bradford's pupils are from ethnic minorities, 23 per cent of Asian origin.

PM warned of gap in new tech uptake

by Hilary Wilce

The present rash of small-scale Government initiatives on educational technology, and piecemeal attempts to update skills, could mask the urgent need for fundamental change to cope with new technology, the Prime Minister has been warned.

A group of information technology experts, established by Mrs Thatcher to advise the Cabinet Office, says this week that the present educational framework is collapsing under the strain of rapid technological change.

The Information Technology Advisory Panel says a national commission of inquiry, bringing together Government, education and industry representatives, must be set up to determine the educational system needed for the next century.

The group, in its examination of the impact information technology will have on education, points out that the pace of change continues to accelerate and will have dramatic, unpredictable effects on teaching and educational structures.

Unlike previous innovations such as language laboratories and video recorders, which settled into low-key roles, information technology will have a "truly revolutionary" impact on educa-

tion. Although the report declines to predict the exact direction technological developments will take, the hardware typical students might use 10 years from now is discussed.

They will own or operate portable personal computer terminals up to 1,000 times more powerful than today's machines, with several colour screens and capacity to respond to the human voice and to generate vocal answers and print-outs. The terminals will give students immediate access to video pictures, audio sound and computer information.

Learning to live with IT. A report by the Information Technology Advisory Panel. HMSO.



Mrs Thatcher: technology team

Sir Keith Joseph laid great stress on parent power

Demitri Argyropulo is a member of the Conservative Party's National Policy Committee on Education, of which he was chairman from 1979 to 1985

James Meikle reports from the annual conference of the Professional Association of Teachers at the University of Manchester

Dawson attacks employers' chief over 'farce' of £4.5bn offer

An outspoken attack on the Burnham employers' leader was made by Mr Peter Dawson, the association's general secretary, in his address to the conference yesterday.

Mr John Pearman had reduced the Coventry talks to "the level of complete farce" by offering a £4.5 billion pay package, he said. Mr Dawson alleged that the sum, floated last Friday, had not even included the cost of new conditions of service.

The Labour leader of the employers had "failed to take the elementary precaution of getting the permission of his own side to utter such figures".

Mr Dawson revealed the size of the offer as he launched an attack on both Mr Pearman and some teachers for wanting to "settle Thatcher's hush" rather than settle pay.

"Their intention is to agree a package of a kind they know the Government will not fund and thereby create a situation in which further unrest in education can be blamed on the Government."

Mr Dawson said the employers had signed the agreement that would cost around £3 billion knowing they could not pay for it. "Without Government resources, the agreement will collapse like a house of cards."

"Unless the further negotiations that have to take place between now and the end of 1986 are successful and

acceptable to the Government, the Coventry proceedings will have been a waste of time except, of course, for those who merely wish to use teachers as pawns in the general election game."

Mr Dawson said that the PAT had signed the agreement but had reservations about saying that implementation was dependent upon the Government providing the money.

He also called on the Government to step in to legislate on new negotiating arrangements.

There should be a single statutory body for negotiating pay and conditions and, if the Government did not step in, "we could still be waiting for an agreed solution to the question in the Acas talks at this time next year, with disastrous implications."

Mr Dawson said there was never going to be agreement even between the unions on a replacement for the present separate Burnham pay and CLEA/St negotiating committee, let alone an agreement between the unions and their employers.

"The fact that everybody has said they will go for a new arrangement does not amount to a row of beans. The differences between the organizations are unbridgeable, so the Government might as well get on with legislating without delay," he declared.



Playing fields threat

Nearly 490 playing fields in 55 local authorities are under threat of being sold off, the conference was told.

The list included 48 sites in Nottinghamshire, 66 in the West Midlands, 28 in South Glamorgan, and 17 each in the London boroughs of Redbridge and Hillingdon.

The figures were given by Mr Nicholas Griffin, an Enfield primary head, before members unanimously called on the Government and local authorities to keep sporting facilities.

Mr Griffin said: "If we care for the children and young people in our charge we must do all we can to retain the use of all these sites, not only by

educational institutions but also by the community out of school hours.

"I believe the effect of the sale of these and similar sites will mean that independent schools will be the only schools with adequate playing space to indulge in our national competitive sports."

Mr Griffin noted that falling school rolls and financial hardship were discouraging the sales. But he also highlighted a lack of manpower, including groundsman, problems of providing a balanced school timetable, and the reluctance of some teachers to accept out-of-classroom activities as part of their normal duties.

RE teacher questioned about Druid association

North Yorkshire education authority has questioned a Scarborough RE teacher who has admitted being an adherent of "Wicca", the pagan religion of the ancient druids.

Mr John Harper, head of RE at Scalby school, recently told Radio York that he donned white, red and black robes for ceremonies where appeals are made to the spirits of dead ancestors.

"A senior member of my staff has interviewed Mr Harper in order to clarify certain matters arising from the Radio York broadcast," Mr Fred Evans, the authority's chief education officer, said. On receipt of his report I

shall decide what, if any, further action should be taken."

Mr Richard Wilkins, secretary of the Association of Christian Teachers, which last year warned schools about the danger of celebrating Halloween, points out that in today's open climate the RE teacher may technically belong to any religion or none.

"That's the come-uppance of the non-sectarian religious education of today. On the other hand, an unusual belief has not got to be too shocking for the broad consensus of the public - probably the parents in this case." Mr Harper was not available for comment.

Minister's silence on deal

Mr Chris Patten, the Education Minister of State, kept his counsel on the pay and conditions deal signed by employers and teachers at Coventry when he addressed the conference the following morning.

He said he had only seen newspaper reports of the agreement, and would keep "a judicious reticence, since I am not entirely beyond ambition."

Mr Patten refused to be drawn on funding or other possible reactions to the agreement but repeated the Government's commitment to better salaries, "a sensible pay structure" with appropriate differentials, the introduction of appraisal and new negotiating machinery.

"But no one should think that the Government would be willing to sign a blank cheque," he added. "We must have peace in the schools and uninterrupted, high-quality education at a realistic, affordable price."

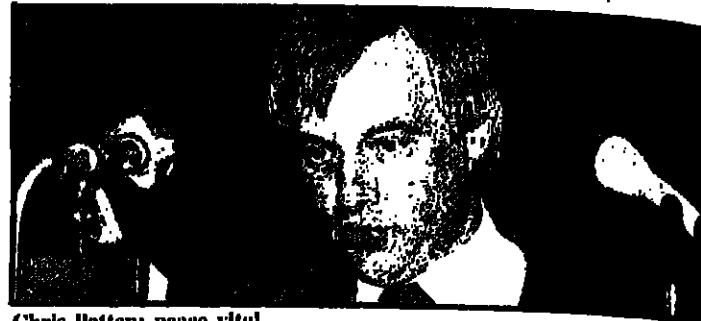
Mr Patten had earlier praised the PAT for its non-striking policy and attacked the behaviour of other teacher unions.

"The Government believes that the disruptive actions of some teacher unions during the last year or so have been wrong and incompatible with professional status," he said.

"It is, in our view, equally wrong for some teachers during this last term, despite the January Acas agreement, to have continued to disrupt the normal work of schools or to fail to provide their normal, full professional service."

"I think it is deplorable that, in some parts of the country, a small number of teachers - without any reprimand from the leadership, or to put it another way, without any leadership - have been prepared to put the money in their back pocket without honouring in full the January Acas deal."

Mr Patten, in a wide-ranging



Chris Patten: peace vital

speech, had returned to his comments on the most able and least able children. He said that teachers should differentiate more and advocated grouping pupils with some regard to their aptitudes and aptitudes, "whether by grouping or banding or in other ways."

He added: "I understand that teachers feel uncomfortable about appearing to put a label on pupils. But I believe that the matters I am now talking about are children but how you actually treat them, whether at home or at school."

Mr Patten also suggested that part of the curriculum should be reserved for less able pupils. It is that such children could gain more from maths, for instance, if they learn a more limited range of concepts that could be firmly understood and applied rather than facing a range of topics "half-grasped and misused."

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Crown school idea rejected

Delegates voted narrowly against the idea of "crown schools" for inner cities.

Speakers who argued that such state-funded schools would be elitist and impoverish other schools only just won the day - by 75 votes to 66. There were 75 abstentions.

A Bradford first school teacher, Mrs Eileen Barracough, said crown schools would receive £50 million funding and have the best equipment, the best buildings and the brightest pupils.

"Local authority schools will continue to be under-resourced, under-equipped, with the most able pupils creamed off, and will attract fewer teachers. There will be a depressing downward spiral, creating 'no-hope' schools in inner-cities, and 'no-hope' adults," she said.

Mr Hugh Ainsley, the association's chairman, told the conference that the idea of comprehensive education were being misinterpreted.

"The concept of equal opportunities for all does not and should not mean the same education for all," he said. "Unfortunately in some schools the search for this ideal results in standards set for the average ability pupil being aimed at for all."

"This leads to a decline in standards for the more able and in the less able being hopelessly lost."

Mr Ainsley, who is in charge of maths at Hamilton College in Lanarkshire, said the problems facing the

Chairman criticizes comprehensive quality

Some comprehensives are spending too much time "aiming at the average", according to the independent school teacher who now heads the PAT.

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"The concept of equal opportunities for all does not and should not mean the same education for all," he said. "Unfortunately in some schools the search for this ideal results in standards set for the average ability pupil being aimed at for all."

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Mr Ainsley, who is in charge of maths at Hamilton College in Lanarkshire, said the problems facing the

teaching of maths, probably the subject least liked in the school curriculum, went deeper than the shortage of secondary schools.

"The first step in improving mathematical competence was ensuring that primary teachers were well qualified," Mr Ainsley said.

Enthusiastic, qualified teachers at secondary level could inspire pupils into doing well. At the moment too many teachers accepted "any school" which arrived at the right answer even if inaccuracies were present in the working.

He also wanted calculation to be more selectively used, instead of being turned to whenever basic mathematical operations were to be performed. Even teachers now misused calculators, averages or attendances on spreadsheets, through carelessness.

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Dr Tessa Blackstone, clerk of the Inner London Education Authority, has been appointed Master of Birkbeck College, University of London, from September 1987. Dr Blackstone, 44, was previously professor of educational administration at the University of London Institute of Education and a member of the Central Policy Review Staff.

Patten attacks Bishop

Mr Patten strongly criticized the Bishop of Durham, the Right Reverend David Jenkins, for suggesting that voluntary-aided church schools should be phased out.

Dr Jenkins told the Centre for the Study of Comprehensive Schools conference in York last week that such schools should be dissolved in an effort to face up to a pluralist society.

Mr Patten hit back at a press conference remarking: "It was an extraordinary thing to say."

"I think our voluntary schools are a broadening, enriching part of our education, from which I benefited, my

children benefited and from which many other children benefit," he said.

Mr Patten went to a Catholic school in Ealing, his three children attended the Church of England primary school at Pimlico, and two granddaughters were heads of Catholic schools in London.

"It seems to me quite astonishing to suggest you could actually become a Catholic by getting rid of these schools. I cannot honestly believe that anything but a minority view about the Church of England or the Catholic Church."

Barry Hugill reports on the pay and conditions pact reached at this week's Acas-inspired talks

Coventry negotiations produce 'historic' deal

After four days of almost continuous negotiations at a Coventry hotel, the local authority employers and five of the six teacher unions signed an "historic agreement" on a new pay and conditions framework for teachers.

The talks started at 11am last Friday and ended just after midnight on Tuesday morning.

Mr John Pearman, the employers' leader, and Mr Doug McAvoy, deputy general secretary, immediately made a joint call for the Secretary of State Mr Kenneth Baker to release the £2.9 billion calculated as the cost of the package over five years.

Mr David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, spoke for most participants in the negotiations when he described it as "the most important educational settlement since 1944."

Only Mr Fred Smithies and Mr Peter Dawson, general secretaries of the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers and the Professional Association of Teachers respectively, rejected his assessment.

The NAS/UWT refused to sign the agreement on the grounds that the maximum salary of £14,500 for an ordinary classroom teacher at the top

of the new unified pay scale was nothing like high enough.

Mr Smithies said the agreement would increase the contractual demands made on classroom teachers as well as introducing a system of appraisal. "Putting all these things together, a maximum of £14,500 for classroom teachers is not enough."

The NAS/UWT argued for a £16,000 maximum but later brought its demand down to £15,400.

Despite refusing to sign the agreement, the union has no intention of "wrecking" it and will take part in the negotiations to finalize the small print.

If the Government decides to fund the agreement, the final details of

which are unlikely to be settled until next January; teachers will for the first time have a written contract.

In return they will enjoy a better salary, restrictions on class sizes and a guaranteed number of "free periods".

For most primary teachers, this would herald a major change in their working conditions. The I.e.a.s. have never agreed before they should have free periods.

Mr Hart said the agreement would result in larger salaries and improved promotion prospects for heads and deputies. His only complaint was that the maximum salary of £29,500 for heads of large secondary schools was "artificially low."

He said local authorities were reluctant to see heads earn £30,000 and more because of the effect on chief education officers' pay.

The major beneficiaries of the agreement would be Scale 1 and 2 teachers. Some could expect increases over 10 years of up to 42 per cent.

The smallest percentage increases would go to the 6,500 teachers paid on the senior teacher scale. Their maximum salary on the new Main Professional Grade would be £16,500.

The I.e.a.s. and unions now plan a campaign to influence public opinion in favour of the settlement.

Mr Pearman believes the Government will not risk public disapproval

and possible electoral unpopularity by refusing to fund the agreement.

Both he and Mr McAvoy put a brave face on the refusal of the NAS/UWT to sign the agreement. Neither believed it would make it more difficult for them to launch a united teachers' campaign, i.e.a.s. and parent organizations in favour of the deal.

One theory at Coventry was that the NAS/UWT dissent would actually make it easier to win public support. By agreeing to a maximum salary figure well below that desired by the NAS/UWT, the NUT and the smaller unions would be seen as moderate and reasonable, the argument went.

If the Government does agree to pay for the settlement it will see the end of the Burnham Committee. A new negotiating committee will take its place - but discussion will continue on what form it should take.

The "Coventry agreement" is the start, not the end, of the negotiating. The unions have agreed in principle that teachers - in return for extra cash - should have specific duties and responsibilities. The employers have accepted there should be maximum class sizes and guaranteed non-contact time. The real details have still to be worked out.

Anatomy of the draft agreement . . .

The agreement covers five main areas:

- Duties;
- Working time, non-contact time and maximum class sizes;
- Grade and salary structure;
- Entry Grade assessment and performance appraisal; and
- Negotiating machinery.

Duties

All teachers paid on the Main Professional Grade scale would be expected to:

- Plan, prepare, determine and review as necessary personal teaching methods and work programmes;
- Teach and ensure the discipline and safety of assigned timetabled classes and groups, with the different educational needs of pupils in mind;
- Set, mark and record pupils' work;
- Promote the general progress and welfare of a class or group of pupils, and provide initial guidance or counselling on educational, social and career matters;
- Assess and record pupils' personal and social needs, development, progress and attainment; provide or contribute to oral or written assessments and reports on individual pupils and groups;
- Contribute to and participate in formal performance appraisal and review team planning, self-evaluation, in-service training and professional development in assigned areas of the curriculum, and pastoral arrangements;
- Advise and co-operate with colleagues on teaching programmes, methods, equipment and materials within assigned areas of the curriculum;
- Co-operate with appropriate specialist agencies and other appropriate outside bodies;
- Ensure the safety and good order of pupils by carrying out an appropriate share of supervision on pupils' arrival at and departure from school, on disposal and assembly at the beginning and end of the midday break, whenever pupils are authorized to be on school premises with the exception of the midday break - and elsewhere when pupils are the responsibility of the school;
- Consult and liaise with parents, attending meetings arranged for that purpose;
- Participate in staff meetings and activities;
- Undertake an appropriate share of the school's staff responsibility to substitute for an absent colleague when required, within limits as agreed;
- Carry out an appropriate share of such administrative and organizational tasks as flow naturally from the above duties;
- Take part in arrangements for presenting pupils in public examinations, and contribute expertise to the preparation and development of courses of study and teaching materials in response to changes in public examinations; and

assessment procedures; Contribute as required to the appointment, induction, professional development and assessment of junior colleagues, including new entrants to teaching;

Co-ordinate the work of other teachers, as required, taking a leading professional role in the review, development and management of assigned curricular, pastoral or organizational activities; Supervise ancillary staff where designated to do so;

Order and allocate appropriate equipment and materials;

Carry out such other related duties and responsibilities at the school as may reasonably be allocated, as need arises, by the headteacher.

The unions are not absolutely happy with these 19 points and there will be continuing discussions which could lead to alterations. The final agreement, however, will not differ significantly from the draft agreement.

Heads will have 14 major duties and responsibilities to:

- Formulate the school's overall aims, objectives and policies for their implementation;
- Participate fully in the selection and appointment of staff; deploy and manage all teaching and non-teaching staff, defining staff tasks - including the delegated responsibilities of senior staff - and providing individual staff members with clear job descriptions;
- Respect conditions of service laid down for staff and maintain relationships with unions representing staff;
- Develop and implement an appropriate curriculum, having regard to pupils' needs, experience, interests, aptitudes and stage of development, the resources available to the school, and the I.e.a.s.' stated principles for the curriculum;
- Keep the work and organization of the school under review, including and liaising with standards of teaching and learning through appropriate criteria and instruments;
- Ensure that appropriate professional and performance standards for staff are established and maintained; oversee the school's system of appraisal; ensure that all staff have access to systematic advice and training appropriate to their needs and in accordance with the I.e.a.s.' policies on staff development;
- Ensure that by evaluation and appraisal the progress of pupils is monitored and recorded;
- Determine a policy and organization for pupils' pastoral care, behaviour and discipline; ensure the maintenance of good order and discipline on the school premises throughout the school day, including the midday break;
- Make arrangements to consult parents and give them regular information about the curriculum, each pupil's individual progress and other matters



Doug McAvoy (right) and John Pearman: issued a joint call for extra funding

to promote a mutual understanding of aims; secure effective working relationships with appropriate specialist agencies and other appropriate outside bodies;

Advise and assist the governing body in the fulfilment of its responsibilities, including attendance at, and reporting to, governors' meetings;

Provide for appropriate liaison and co-operation with the I.e.a.s.' officers, including making such returns as the authority may from time to time properly require, and with other schools and colleges with which the school relates;

Deploy, allocate, control and account for the school's financial resources, including school funds and any budget allocated by the I.e.a.s.

Make provision, in accordance with locally agreed procedures, for the security and effective supervision of buildings and grounds, and the prompt reporting of maintenance needs to the I.e.a.s.

Participate in arrangements for appraisal of his or her own performance and the identification and meeting of training needs.

This list of duties is also subject to negotiation and alterations could be made.

The duties and responsibilities of deputy heads have still to be formulated.

But the document does specify 15 duties and responsibilities of the teachers which will be: oversee those of experienced teachers; changes in public examinations; and

Working time, non-contact time and maximum class sizes

The draft agreement says: "Time at the direction of the headteacher should be stipulated as a maximum both in terms of hours and days per year. The maximum number of days per year shall be 195, inclusive of five days beyond the pupil year on activities such as in-service training. The maximum number of hours per year will be negotiated between the parties within the next five months."

"As a matter of urgency the parties will conclude negotiations on cover to take effect from autumn term, 1986."

It adds: "At the same time, the parties will jointly study and seek to conclude (within five months) negotiations on the following matters:

- A basis upon which and a formula by which non-contact periods in primary schools can be phased in over an agreed timescale;
- The periods of non-contact in secondary schools;
- Maximum class-contact time per week on average in schools;
- The phased introduction of limits on class size for the different types of classes and schools, on the basis that the limits will be applied flexibly enough to allow for the absorption of the non-contact periods and unplanned additions to school rolls and to permit educationally desirable combinations of classes, or groups, of children."

In January all teachers, including heads and deputies, would receive a lump sum payment of approximately £750. Teachers on Scales 1, 2, 3, 4 and senior teachers would be assimilated to the next highest point on the new Main Professional Grade. This would be on top of the 5.7 per cent already paid.

Fifteen per cent of teachers, mainly heads of department, would also receive an extra allowance of £750 or £2,000 according to their responsibilities. They would be designated principal teachers.

Heads and deputies would be phased onto the new salary scale in four equal stages starting in January 1987 and ending in September 1989.

The largest increases, in some cases more than 40 per cent over 10 years, will go to the lowest-paid teachers. Middle-ranking teachers would stand to gain by between 20 and 30 per cent.

The lump sum payment will be calculated as the difference between £750 and a quarter of the annual increase which would be received by virtue of the assimilation to the next highest point on the Main Professional Grade.

For example, a teacher currently earning £10,986 would be assimilated to an annual salary of £11,200 and would therefore receive a lump sum payment of:

£11,200 - 11,200 ÷ 9.86 = £214

£214 + £750 = £964

£964 + £750 = £1,714

£1,714 + £750 = £2,464

£2,464 + £750 = £3

PRIMARY

Brent aims to set attainment levels

by Geraldine Hackett

The London borough of Brent wants to set attainment levels in basic skills for its 70 primary schools because of concern at the under-achievement of pupils, an estimated 40 to 45 per cent of whom are black.

Launching the first major investigation into primary education in the borough on Tuesday, Mr Ron Anderson, Labour chairman of the education committee, said the results of standardized tests indicated that children were performing below what could be expected from their age and ability.

The council was also reacting to parental concern about the pace at which their children were mastering the three "Rs".

Brent has increased the number of advisory inspectors in the primary sector from two to five in order to carry out an appraisal of all primary schools over the next 12 months. They aim to build up a picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the schools before drawing up guidelines which will set out what they should be achieving in teaching basic skills.

Mr Anderson said the education committee intended setting up a working party to draw up a core curriculum for schools. "There is a need for a standard basic minimum in schools and parents have a right to know what to expect from a primary school," he said.

A major factor in underachievement was, he said, "inherent racism" in primary schools. Part of the problem was that teachers did not have high enough expectations of black pupils.

Brent is about to introduce systematic records of the ethnic origin of its pupils. Not all schools record the ethnic origin of pupils and the authority does not have an accurate figure for the proportion of black pupils.

The HMI are currently inspecting three of Brent's primary schools. "The results of tests over the years have shown an improvement in schools, but there is still a large group of pupils who are not performing as well as they should be," said Mr Anderson.

"We have taken note of the views of parents who feel uneasy at what is going on in schools," he said. Brent also has plans for a joint consultative committee which will involve parents' representatives.

When the appraisal is complete the education committee will consider what action needs to be taken. "Where we discover weaknesses in schools we might increase the level of in-service training or we might have to find extra resources," he said. "Our concern is that some schools may not be achieving adequate standards in basic skills."

The borough has had serious problems keeping classes open because of a shortage of primary school teachers. Mr Anderson said the borough had managed to reduce the vacancy level for teachers and he did not envisage problems on the same scale emerging next term.

"The proposals we have in mind are a major investment in the future education of children in Brent. The extra advisers will have a major impact in speeding up the recruitment of teachers," he said. One of the new posts will carry special responsibility for the under-fives. Brent recently announced plans for three new nurseries.

Minder matter

The 52,000 registered childminders in Britain are to be given access to training material designed to meet their needs. The material follows collaboration between the National Childminding Association and the Open University.

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Mam's memories: Visitors to Edinburgh's recently-renovated Museum of Childhood discover it has lost none of its old charm. The museum, which reopens expects around 500 visitors a day.

Julia Hagedorn reports from the United Kingdom Reading Association sessions at the Eleventh World Congress on Reading held at the London University Institute of Education this week

Narrow research at root of reading problems

Educational research came under searching attack at the conference from John Merritt, the former professor of educational studies at the Open University.

At a session on reading education, he said teachers could not give children the attention and opportunities available in good homes. Classes were simply too large.

As a result, teachers took refuge in theory to make up for the lack of real experience they could provide. There was material available to explain every technique or method used in the teaching of reading.

But Professor Merritt added: "There is little research to show that this panoply of expertise is justified. There is none to show that one method of teaching is any better than the other."

He wondered who was the expert when children were being taught to

read before going to school by those with no professional training at all. "The time has surely come", Professor Merritt added "to ask whether the academic establishment is wearing the emperor's clothes."

Academics and researchers had to get off the backs of teachers who, in turn, should encourage parents to go into the classroom so that good home influences could be reproduced in the school.

Professor Merritt did not fully support many of the schemes where parents were involved in hearing their children read. He felt that researchers might be merely pushing up the reading scores at the expense of other levels of reading.

"We must provide continuous support for teachers to hold their own against the researchers who are unaware of their own limitations," he warned.

When challenged by the audience, he elaborated on his criticism, saying: "The vast amount of research is very narrow and often its interpretation in schools or instructional materials bears no relation to what might have been in the mind of the researchers."

Professor Merritt also made a plea for providing a qualification for those teachers who were working with parents in a way that really involved dialogue and participation in the "organic process of education".

This would be part of a move to provide a more systematic and self-generating approach to parent-teacher partnership than the *ad hoc* one at present in operation.

He suggested half-a-term's work leading to a project certificate, the writing-up of a number of such projects worth a full certificate, and a survey of teacher-produced material in other schools as diploma.

Ashamed to speak Urdu

Many secondary school pupils from Urdu-speaking families are ashamed of their mother tongue and more than half of them have no interest in learning the language, according to one Nottingham teacher.

Muhammed Nazeer-Ud-Din, a part-time teacher of Urdu in five colleges, said that the language carried no social esteem, and many pupils wanted to distance themselves from it to become more acceptable to the host community. They looked on Urdu as a "taboo" subject.

He added that the available textbooks were totally irrelevant to the lives of his pupils because none of the material was produced in the UK. Mr Nazeer-Ud-Din also complained that although he had taught English for many years, now that he was teaching Urdu, other staff talked to him as if he could not understand English.

He had also encountered opposition from some teachers who did not believe in mother-tongue teaching.

Achievers 'deny culture' 'Red' books help juniors

Bilingualism raises strong passions. Mr John Singh, HM Inspector with special responsibility for ethnic minorities, told the conference.

Teachers should recognize these feelings but be detached from them, he said.

At John Broadbent, co-ordinator of a European Economic Community pilot project at the Institute of Education, regretted that many teachers were failing to recognize the challenges and opportunities presented by Britain's multilingual population.

He said: "Despite the discovery that a sound basis of literacy in the home language is a prerequisite for the acquisition of further linguistic and cultural resources, the majority of children who succeed in our schools do so at the tragic expense of the denial of their cultural roots."

The social reality was that Britain did not celebrate or accept differences, he said.

Mr Broadbent felt that even those teachers who fought against a monolingual society failed to recognize that the varieties of language a child brought into school were valid.

Ms Sylvaine Wiles, of the Centre for Urban Educational Studies in London, emphasized that the needs of bilingual children must be met in the mainstream class. If these pupils were removed for mother-tongue teaching, it became marginalized, racially and socially divisive and was unacceptable. She was convinced that teaching mother tongues and English as a second language in mainstream classes was the only legitimate goal, but admitted not all the problems had been solved.

She wanted all teachers to be trained in ESL teaching and the role of the specialist to change from separate support to team teaching.

Ms Wiles said attitudes of heads and administrators needed to change if ESL teaching were to become real team work and children were not to be withdrawn continually as at present. "Individual teachers will have little impact on the quality of provision if senior teachers are not part of it," she said.

Mr David Houlton, a lecturer in primary education at the University of Nottingham, emphasized that the concept of the multilingual primary school was relatively recent.

It was only in the last five years, he said, that teachers had begun to see that their pupils' bilingualism had a positive part to play in their learning. Schools previously had considered that pupils' mother tongues, if not English, could be an impediment to their learning. "It was general practice to eradicate the mother tongue as soon as possible by whatever humane means were at the teacher's disposal," he said.

He was pleased to see more enlightened policies at work in some primary schools, although he stressed that new developments in multilingual work were still essentially piecemeal and in their early days.

Mr Houlton said multilingual teaching had a profound effect on teaching styles. In many ways, he said, teachers were the disadvantaged ones: their background was infinitely less rich in tradition or life experience than many of their pupils. It was quite inappropriate for them in these circumstances to see themselves as the embodiment of all knowledge.

The use of "real" books rather than reading schemes can help slower learners to develop a more positive attitude towards reading, a pilot Leicester project has found.

Forty-eight children from four inner city primary schools took part in the project run by Margaret Litchfield, of the Leicestershire Literary Support Service.

Older children volunteered to help the younger ones, who were all poor readers, for 15 minutes daily, four days a week, from September to December last year. All of the younger children had been on reading schemes.

After three months, standardized test results showed that both the "tutors" and their "pupils" had made greater average gains in reading than did the children in the control group.

Eighty-four per cent preferred the books they had been reading to their normal class reading books. All had thought of themselves as better readers.

NEWS

Welsh board charged with inaction

by Bert Lodge

The Government has taken the Welsh Joint Education Committee to task for failing to develop Welsh-medium education - less than a year after deciding it was the ideal body for the job.

At a recent WJEC council meeting in Caernarfon, Mr Wyn Roberts, Welsh junior minister, warned the committee in plain terms that unless it took action not only might the job be given to somebody else, but the future of the WJEC would be in doubt.

Mr Roberts pointed out there was no sign yet of the central forum for Welsh language education expected from the committee. "I cannot hide my

disappointment that a strategy to achieve this has not yet been fully developed."

He reminded the committee that some people did not agree it was the best choice. In a clear reference to the Welsh Language Society, which has conducted a three-year campaign of civil disobedience, he added: "I am not referring to the most raucous voices in Wales today; there are sounder, more reputable critics. But should you fail to bear your statutory responsibilities... there could be consequences as far as the WJEC is concerned. Certainly other arrangements would have to be made to accommodate the legitimate

aspirations of Welsh parents for the education of their children."

Mr Gareth Lloyd Jones, committee secretary, said this week that he found the minister's questioning of its future rather strange. It had a range of functions, the most important being the largest examining body in Wales. It was also a regional council for FE.

As for handing over responsibility for Welsh-medium education to some other body - that would make little sense because responsibility for the curriculum in schools and colleges will still lie with local education authorities - all fully represented on the WJEC. Mr Lloyd Jones also accused the

minister of failing to give any assurance of additional resources for the responsibility of developing Welsh-medium education.

Miss Angharad Tomos, leader of the Welsh Language Society education group, was sceptical of the minister's stance. "His condemnation of the committee is as much a condemnation of the Welsh Office. They blame each other but the truth is that neither of them wants the job of developing the Welsh language."

Unless real progress was seen by September, she said, the society would step up its campaign of direct action against the WJEC.

In-service funding decision awaited

by Hilary Wilce

The size of the grant for the new national in-service training arrangements, due to come into effect next spring, will be announced later this month.

The delay on the Education Bill, which will not now receive its third reading until the autumn, is not expected to affect the timing of the announcement.

Local authorities are due to make detailed bids for money from the new in-service pool next October, but as yet they do not know what the national training priorities will be.

Chief education officers have complained bitterly about what they say is an impossible timetable.

In a response to the draft guidelines for the new grants scheme, the Association of County Councils says members are calling for provisional allocations to be announced immediately, or for the scheme to be delayed for a year.

The ACC says it will continue its opposition to the proposals until the size of the INSET grant is made clear, and more is known about the amount of centralized control that will be exercised.

Local authorities also want a clear statement about the basis on which allocations are to be made, and indica-

tion figures for future years' funding. The National Union of Teachers says the overall level of INSET funding must rise to about 5 per cent of the teachers' salary bill - about £280 to £300 million - if the new arrangements are to be effective.

The proportion of funds allocated to national priorities should not exceed 20 per cent, and some money should be devolved to schools.

The now-disbanded Advisory Committee on the Supply and Education of Teachers should be reconstituted to monitor the new scheme, it says.

The union shares the ACC's anxiety about the lack of information on how money will be apportioned between local authorities, and suggests pupil numbers would form a useful basis. Decisions about the future pattern of initial teacher training in Wales are to be postponed for 12 months, pending the results of a review of provision in the public sector colleges and in the University of Wales.

The decision was announced by Mr Nicholas Edwards, Secretary of State for Wales, on the advice of the Wales Advisory Body for Local Authority Higher Education. The review will be carried out jointly by the WAB and the University Grants Committee.

Rural needs 'not met'

In-service training arrangements in the most rural counties of Wales are failing to deal with the special problems posed by falling rolls, according to a study group of academics and administrators.

Their two-year study focused on secondary education in Gwynedd, Powys and Dyfed, excluding the industrialized area round Llanelli. The report concludes that falling rolls create a different problem for rural areas than for large towns.

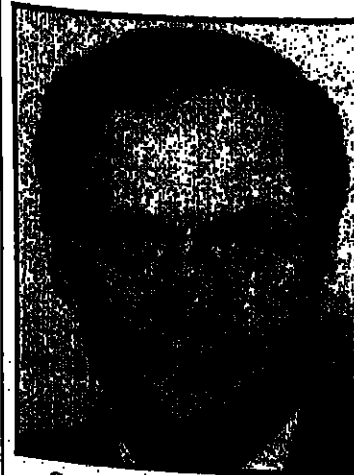
Amalgamating small schools serving a scattered rural population is not a practicable proposition, it says.

The group, based on Aberystwyth University, recommends that teaching in small country schools should be treated as a specific skill requiring its own in-service courses. Distance-learning programmes could be introduced for minority subjects and for Welsh-medium work.

It also suggests that a joint coordinating body should be set up by the three I.E.A.s.

Secondary education in rural Wales. The Aberystwyth Policy Group, Faculty of Education, University of Wales, Aberystwyth. £1.50.

Industry boosts research cash



George Walden: greater scope

A growing proportion of university research is being supported by money from industry and commerce.

According to new figures from the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP), university earnings from private funds are going up dramatically. Between 1983-84 and 1984-85 they grew by 46 per cent, to nearly £48 million.

The figure includes research grants and contracts, but excludes money from industry to sponsor students or endow teaching posts, or funds raised by university companies.

Earnings from short courses have also increased, from £13.5 million in 1981-82 to £29.9 million in 1984-85.

Mr Michael Powell, the CVCP's senior administrative officer, said almost all universities were showing an increase in private research funds, but

some, such as London, Salford and Heriot-Watt, were showing dramatic rises, with well over £1 million a year coming into their institutions. The CVCP is now drawing up guidelines on good practice to help universities get the best out of their contacts with industry and commerce.

Meanwhile, 23 university institutions have been authorized to exploit inventions arising from the work commissioned by the national research councils.

Last week, Mr George Walden, minister for higher education, announced which institutions were to benefit from the arrangements brought in last year by Sir Keith Joseph, the former Education Secretary, to give individual researchers and their colleges and universities greater scope to exploit their research.

Call to limit heads' power in reforming curriculum

by Lindsey Darking

Headteachers should not be in charge of the school curriculum, teachers at the Dudley Summer School on the Curriculum 5-16 heard last week.

Referring to changes in the Education Bill, which give final responsibility for the implementation of the school curriculum to heads, Mr Eamonn O'Kane, national senior vice-president of the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers, said that schools would need a radical reorganization of their hierarchies if curriculum initiatives were not to become a "public relations exercise".

Mr O'Kane said such documents as the HMI 5-16 Curriculum Matters series were welcomed by most teachers, but that consultation on the curriculum would be effective in the long term only if teachers also had real decision-making power over such things as timetables and organization.

"We have to change the atmosphere of schools to a 'collegiate' one where teachers feel by and large equal," he said. "Status and power divisions in British schools inhibit free discussion, and there is a danger that what appears to be reform is no more than a sliding over the surface, leaving the fundamentals untouched. A dilution in the position and role of headteachers may be the inevitable result if genuine curriculum reforms are to take place."

Mr O'Kane told the conference that demands on teacher time for curriculum planning would need to be backed by a clearer definition of responsibilities.

"We need agreement on the limitations of time to be spent on curriculum activities, otherwise changes will be brought in in a bad-tempered way by a few active individuals," he stressed.

Mr O'Kane also criticized teachers for underestimating the quality and demands of their work.

"Teachers are under tremendous pressure in the classroom to an extent that others do not realize. They apologize for themselves too much and are bad at conveying the difficulties of their job to the public," he said.

Parent governors came under attack at the summer school from Mr Ron Westbury, chief education officer for Dudley.

Mr Westbury opposed trends in the present Education Bill towards more parental control over curriculum planning through school governing bodies.

"It is my experience that parent governors can form the biggest resistance to curriculum change," he said. "For many parent governors, their main concern is the progress of their own child, and they tend to block change or development which might affect the child during its school career."

Headteachers should consult all parents about the curriculum rather than just two or three active ones on the governing body whose views might not be representative, he added.

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'Dig deeper' warning to Government on TVEI kitty

The Manpower Services Commission has warned the Government that the £900 million promised for the extension of the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative to all Britain's schools and colleges may not be enough.

The Government wants the programme, at present operating as a pilot scheme in a few hundred schools and colleges, to be extended over the next 10 years to make technical and vocational courses available to all 14 to 18-year-olds.

But the £900 million a year allocated is less than twice the amount which the pilot programme is costing.

In a letter to Lord Young, the Employment Secretary, Mr Bryan Nicholson, the Commission's chairman, says that the Commissioners are unanimous in welcoming the decision to extend the scheme and accept that significant progress can be made on the funding proposed.

But he adds that the Commissioners are determined that the quality of the courses must be maintained, and that in the light of this need, they consider that the proposed funding is "tight".

The Commission, he says, "therefore reserves the right to seek further resources if necessary at a later date."

Mr Nicholson also draws attention to the Commissioners' conviction that getting an adequate supply of qualified and competent teachers in relevant subjects and ensuring systematic in-service training under the new arrangements to be introduced next year will be of crucial importance to the success of the plan.

However, it may be interpreted by outsiders, the Commissioners' statement is not an assertion that it is impossible to carry out the programme for the money.

The figure of £900 million was not pulled out of the blue by the Treasury and put to the MSC on a take-it-or-leave-it basis. It was worked out in the first place by MSC officials as the minimum figure for which an extension programme of sorts might be obtained. But all the cost assumptions were trimmed back so as to get the price down to a sum that the Government was prepared, in its present mood, to swallow.

What the Commissioners are saying, therefore, is that the money is enough to warrant starting on the programme,

but that the time may well come when the Government - or some successor - will have to dig deeper into its pocket if it really wants what it says.

The MSC's strategy in this matter is much the same as it used to secure Government backing for the two-year YTS: work out an austerity version of the programme, which, although it is likely to draw sceptical or anguished comments from many of the interests involved, can be costed at a figure acceptable to the government of the day and hope that sooner or later someone will agree to provide the additional funding which will be needed to do the thing properly.

It is now clear that there is no question of the TVEI being handed over at the end of the pilot programme to the education service to run, as Lord Young, hard-on-heart, has repeatedly promised in the past.

Mr Nicholson takes the pragmatic view that the present arrangement, under which the MSC controls the funding and allocates the money to authorities whose bids meet its criteria, subsequently monitoring their performance, is working splendidly and should therefore be left alone.

The education interests involved are no longer challenging this *de facto* structure. They are content that the actual decisions as to the criteria and the vetting of proposals are in the hands of the TVEI national steering group which they dominate; and that the MSC coordinators on the ground are helping rather than hawking the schools and colleges running the courses.

What remains to be seen is how the steering group will cope with a constant stream of proposals from authorities all over the country rather than the few dozen a year the pilot programme involves. They will be helped by the decision to set up a sub-group to advise them on quality and standards, which will work in cooperation with the similar group already advising the Youth Training Board.

Further evidence that the ideological and professional animosity which surrounded the first years of the TVEI has virtually disappeared is provided by the Government's acceptance of an MSC proposal that extra funding should be provided to wean on to the scheme those authorities who have boycotted the pilot programme. Most of them are radical Labour councils.

Voluntary boards called to account

The pigeons the Government scattered when it abolished the statutory training boards five years ago were back circling overhead this week. Ministers have had to sanction a Manpower Services Commission initiative which draws attention to the inadequacies of the voluntary system which has replaced the boards.

The Commission is to issue guidelines to help non-statutory training bodies "to meet all the promises made when the industry training boards were abolished." Ever since their demise, horror stories have abounded about the amateur approach of the training bodies in some sectors and of the purely token attitude to training adopted by others. Many of them are tiny, with slender resources and expertise.

Ministers have been understandably shy of any action which would draw attention to the situation, but now their hands have been forced by the setting up of the National Council for Vocational Qualifications, whose activities will inevitably spotlight sector deficiencies.

Mr Bryan Nicholson, the MSC's chairman, says that while many of the organizations are exemplary, others "simply don't come anywhere near scratch." The MSC's training division will offer to help the weaker bodies improve.

Local employer networks could take over responsibility for finding work experience placements from schools and colleges, Mr Nicholson revealed this week.

He told an Association of British Chambers of Commerce meeting that the MSC was exploring with the association and the Confederation of British Industry a plan to set up such networks to take a hand in the planning and improvement of their local education and training provision.

Edited by
Mark Jackson



St Pauls, the scene of riots and looting in April 1980, is now a "task force" area where job creation schemes will be especially encouraged.

Deprived youngsters get pledge from companies

More than 30 of Britain's leading companies have committed themselves to helping inner-city schools. They will offer industrial expertise and, in some cases, lend or donate equipment and other resources.

Many inner-city schools, particularly those with large numbers of ethnic minority groups on roll, have been severely touched by links between schools and industry developing in other parts of the country. They are left out if local industries are too weak or demoralized to help, while big national firms have steered clear of involvement.

All 30 companies which have decided to act are members of the Council of the Industrial Society, and most have been prominent in developing industry-education cooperation.

They will all support a Government-funded programme announced this week under which the society will encourage companies to help create jobs for young people in inner city areas.

The society will station coordinators for a year in six of the eight inner-city districts which the Government has designated "task force" areas. These are: London's North Kensington and North Peckham; Bristol St Pauls; Leeds Chapeltown; the Highfields district of Leicester; and North Central Middlesbrough.

The coordinators will work out practical packages to help 3,000 young people, using the resources of local and neighbouring companies.

Their support is likely to take three forms:

- helping and advising young people who want to set up their own businesses - a scheme the society already runs successfully in other areas;
- offering places on Youth Training Schemes within easy travelling distance; and
- bringing company staff into the schools to help with work-related teaching and to advise pupils on job hunting and training.

The society, which has the longest experience of organizing active links between schools and companies of any group in this field, sees the scheme as potentially the most valuable contribution to improving the job chances of ghetto youngsters in the longer term.

Mrs Julia Middleton, the society's enterprise director who is heading the operation, said this week: "Industry Year is providing a great boost to industry's involvement in the schools, but so far schools in the deprived areas have in the main been left out. What we are aiming to do is to get companies to provide the same sort of support as they are already offering to schools in less afflicted areas."

The first task is to establish a relationship in which representatives of industry - the unions as well as management - go into the schools to give advice and help. There is no guarantee that they will be able to do any more than that, but our general experience is that, once close links exist, companies often try to provide what material assistance they can in such forms as gifts of equipment.

"The companies on our council have unanimously approved our proposals. That means the whole operation is off to a flying start."

She aims to get at least 250 business people helping in each of the six areas, and estimates that their contribution in kind will be worth at least twice as much as the money the Government is providing.

The scheme is the first major project initiated by the society's new director, former Civil Service union leader Mr Alistair Graham. Through the Manpower Services Commission, he got the Government to agree in principle early this year, well before he officially took over the job.

Although the society's officials are reluctant to admit that the scheme represents any departure from its established role as an industrial relations and training organization, it is very much the kind of project which is normally entrusted to the big social work agencies.

Mr Stephen Lederer, South Western region CBI spokesman, said: "We had the ghetto idea ugly. Once you establish that there is worthwhile life outside, you might set them on the road to better housing and promotion prospects."

Mr Peter Courtes, deputy community relations officer, said: "We agree with the philosophy. You can never solve the problems in St Pauls alone."

Black youths in Bristol could escape from the ghetto if employers in an "outer ring" around St Pauls would offer them apprenticeships, says the Confederation of British Industry.

A regional working party of the CBI has recommended to the Government's inner city task force, set up in February, that inner city improvement should not be a priority on funds.

Instead, the working party would prefer to promote ways to entice black youngsters to live and work in different areas of Bristol.

One way it suggests to draw them out

enterprise director who is heading the operation, said this week: "Industry Year is providing a great boost to industry's involvement in the schools, but so far schools in the deprived areas have in the main been left out. What we are aiming to do is to get companies to provide the same sort of support as they are already offering to schools in less afflicted areas."

The first task is to establish a relationship in which representatives of industry - the unions as well as management - go into the schools to give advice and help. There is no guarantee that they will be able to do any more than that, but our general experience is that, once close links exist, companies often try to provide what material assistance they can in such forms as gifts of equipment.

"The companies on our council have unanimously approved our proposals. That means the whole operation is off to a flying start."

She aims to get at least 250 business people helping in each of the six areas, and estimates that their contribution in kind will be worth at least twice as much as the money the Government is providing.

The scheme is the first major project initiated by the society's new director, former Civil Service union leader Mr Alistair Graham. Through the Manpower Services Commission, he got the Government to agree in principle early this year, well before he officially took over the job.

Although the society's officials are reluctant to admit that the scheme represents any departure from its established role as an industrial relations and training organization, it is very much the kind of project which is normally entrusted to the big social work agencies.

Mr Stephen Lederer, South Western region CBI spokesman, said: "We had the ghetto idea ugly. Once you establish that there is worthwhile life outside, you might set them on the road to better housing and promotion prospects."

Mr Peter Courtes, deputy community relations officer, said: "We agree with the philosophy. You can never solve the problems in St Pauls alone."

Black youths in Bristol could escape from the ghetto if employers in an "outer ring" around St Pauls would offer them apprenticeships, says the Confederation of British Industry.

Bill Norris reports on ethical issues facing American sex education

Contraception proves more effective than saying 'no'

Teenage pregnancy among American high school pupils has reached almost epidemic proportions.

The latest figures produced by the National Education Association show that more than half a million schoolgirls are getting pregnant each year, and some 270,000 actually have their babies. One in every ten school-aged females is a mother-17 per cent have two children.

The annual cost to the American taxpayer of providing for these girls and their families is \$16.65 billion (£11 billion). Seventy-eight per cent of them have incomes below the poverty level. It has been estimated that in New York City, adolescent girls have a 45 per cent chance of becoming pregnant.

The Reagan Administration's solution to this crisis of fecundity, which accounts for 25 per cent of female drop-outs from high school, is to urge girls to say "no" with more conviction. Mr William Bennett, Education Secretary, who is a Roman Catholic, has opposed family planning clinics in schools on the grounds that "they tend to legitimize (sic) the very behaviour they are trying to prevent".

Mr Bennett made that speech in Baltimore last April, and it is in Baltimore that a three-year experi-

UNITED STATES

ment has just been carried out which may point to a more practical solution to the problem.

Researchers from Johns Hopkins University have been working with 3,400 teenage pupils at four inner-city schools. Virtually all were poor, black and underprivileged. When the experiment began, 47 per cent of the girls in the seventh and eighth grades (12 and 13 year-olds) were sexually active, and 92 per cent of the boys in the ninth grade.

In two of the schools, pupils were given counselling by a social worker and a nurse, and access to a nearby clinic that dispensed contraceptives. Pupils at the other schools received only the existing basic sex education mandated by the state of Maryland. After three years, it was found that girls in the schools where counselling and contraceptives were available had 30.1 per cent fewer pregnancies than at the beginning. In the non-participating schools, pregnancies actually increased by 57.6 per cent over the same period.

Not only were pregnancies reduced by the experiment, but the level of

sexual activity went down. The researchers reported that those students who were not already sexually active postponed their first experience by an average of seven months, compared to their non-participating peers.

"There has been a fear voiced in some quarters that exposing young people to programmes that openly discuss sexual behaviour and provide them with contraception will increase sexual activity," said Laurie Zabin, one of five Johns Hopkins academics who worked on the study. "This study should, once and for all, discredit such claims."

"In fact, it appears that an understanding of the consequences of irresponsible or unprotected sex, combined with ready access to services, helps those who are already sexually active to guard against pregnancy, and at the same time helps those who are not to say 'no' to sex."

The National Education Association has taken note, and changed its policy to one of support for community-operated school-based clinics where pupils can receive intensive counselling from trained personnel. It has stopped short, however, of saying that such clinics should distribute contraceptives.



In New York City, adolescent girls have a 45 per cent chance of becoming pregnant.

'Desperate' shortage

Barring last-minute appointments, Los Angeles will be short of more than 2,000 teachers when schools reopen in September after the summer holiday. Houston, Texas, will have 1,688 teaching vacancies, and Philadelphia 500.

Altogether, a survey by the National Education Association of the 110 largest school districts in America discloses some 32,000 vacancies. The teacher shortage is beginning to bite. Figures for the other 15,000 smaller school districts are not available, but the NEA estimates that the total could be 100,000.

Of particular concern to the teachers' union is the admission by 38 per cent of the districts surveyed that they would assign teachers outside their field of training. A further 38 per cent said they intended to recruit people from other fields who had not been trained as teachers.

Fifteen per cent of the districts, says the report, are "so desperate" that they would hire teachers from foreign countries.

A million micros are still not enough

The use of computers in American schools has doubled over the past two years, but it is still not enough. So says a new study by Johns Hopkins University, which reports that the average high school pupil used a computer for 40 minutes a week in 1985. In elementary schools, average usage was 35 minutes a week.

"A typical high school pupil could profitably use computers for writing compositions, for memorizing what- ever facts are truly unavoidable, for understanding relationships and concepts in mathematics and science courses, and for writing computer programmes," says the report. "Each of these separate uses might occupy 30 minutes to three hours of computer time per week. Thus, a high school pupil might profitably use computers for an hour or two per day."

The number of school computers in the US quadrupled between 1983 and 1985, from 250,000 to more than a million. A typical secondary school now has 21, a middle school 14, and an

elementary school 6. But elementary school pupils are more likely to get their hands on the machines, some 30 per cent of them using computers during the average week. For high schools, the figure is 21 per cent.

An even greater disparity is shown among teachers. The study found that 37 per cent of those in elementary schools were using computers, but only 15 per cent of secondary school teachers. However, when judged on their knowledge and use of computer programs and programming, computer-using high school teachers were well in the lead. Seventy-seven per cent of them were judged to be experts, compared with only 10 per cent in the elementary schools.

Computer laboratories, which allow teachers to work with a substantial portion of a class at the same time, are becoming much more common. Sixty-nine per cent of high schools now have them, and 30 per cent of elementary schools.

Lotteries give school boards a moral dilemma

Schools in California are enjoying an unexpected windfall. The state lottery, set up last October to provide extra money for education, has proved so popular that it seems likely to generate more than three times the profits estimated for the first year of operation.

Seven US states now have lotteries which devote all, or nearly all, their profits to education. They range from New Hampshire, which was the first to be established in 1964 and currently raises about \$4 million (£2.6 million) a year, to New York where the schools benefit to the tune of \$600 million annually.

In California, where everything tends to be bigger and better, even this sum seems likely to be dwarfed. The governor's budget for 1985-86 estimated that the schools' 34 per cent share of the pot (\$50 per cent goes on prizes and 16 per cent on administration) would be \$300 million. In fact, the first quarterly share-out proved to be \$272 million, with \$225 million coming in the second quarter. Ticket

sales for the first year are now projected at \$2 billion. Nevertheless, not everyone approves of the lottery. The California School Boards Association was divided on the question when it came up on the state ballot in 1984, many members fearing that their normal funding would be cut in consequence.

In the event, 58 per cent of voters approved the project, since when the school boards have concentrated on making sure that they decide where the money is spent.

The first allocation mostly went on computers, books, and bonuses for teachers. At present, the law prevents lottery profits from being used for school building, but there are moves to change this. With so much money coming down the pipeline, Los Angeles has decided to set aside \$35.7 million for the relief of overcrowding, and to wait for the law to be altered.

The fear of California school board members are echoed in states which have long-established lotteries. In Ohio, where it was decided in 1983 to

devote 100 per cent of lottery profits to education, the schools have received \$600 million. The state school boards association acknowledges that this has enabled them to buy a lot of things they would otherwise have had to do without, but points out that lottery contributions are only sufficient to run the schools for five days.

"Getting the public to understand that isn't always easy," said John Brandt, the association's deputy executive director. "It creates problems in terms of raising local revenues. We have to put budget levies on the ballot. And when the lottery commission markets the lottery, which it does very well, the local voters think the lottery is the solution to local problems."

Michigan provides a good example of what educators fear may happen when lotteries are established. There, the School Aid Fund has been getting lottery proceeds since 1972, and currently earns \$360 million a year. But the schools have seen little, if any, extra money. Contributions to education from the state's general fund have

been trimmed back proportionately. Kathleen Strauss, of the Michigan School Boards Association, objects to the idea in principle. "I don't think it's proper for government to encourage this kind of thing," she said. "It's improper to tie gambling revenues to education. Education should be paid for by taxes, and people should know they have to pay for it."

Ms Strauss's moral principles, however, cut little ice with legislators trying to find extra money for schools at a time when federal support is under threat. Of the 22 states which now have lotteries, more are expected to switch the proceeds into education very soon. Others are considering new lotteries for the purpose, and Florida is likely to be the next to join the club.

Only in the Bible Belt are the temptations being firmly resisted. Poles in both Kentucky and Alabama showed the voters were in favour of a lottery to benefit education, but legislation founded after a flood of protests from the religious community.

Identity cards breed resentment among black pupils

SOUTH AFRICA

Anger is growing in the country's black schools over the imposition of new security measures designed to stop young black activists from mobilizing pupils.

The measures, introduced when the new term started three weeks ago, include the compulsory re-registration of black pupils, and the issuing to them of special identity tags. Wire mesh fences have been built around many schools and security guards employed to ensure that all registered pupils stay on the premises during school hours and that no unauthorized people get in.

It was reported this week that as many as 300,000 black pupils had been barred from school because they had

refused to register or carry identity cards, but the final picture was not expected to be clear until today.

The measures, allegedly agreed between the Department of Education and 7,000 college principals, were never discussed with parents or pupils. The National Education Crisis Committee has described them as "a recipe for disaster" and the Transvaal Students' Congress has said they have turned schools into Nazi camps.

Reporting restrictions make it difficult to ascertain the extent of pupils' reaction to the new passes. But many schoolchildren are said to have burnt them and it has been reported that some were threatening to make their teachers eat the passes if they cooperated with the new system.

Fifty "incidents" of violence were reported in one week in Johannesburg's schools alone.



A girl lies injured after being hit in the stomach by a rubber bullet during a demonstration.

Primary reports row underlines public concern over red tape

WEST GERMANY

Paul Bendelow describes the latest saga of interfering bureaucracy

A row about the way teachers write reports in a primary school has made national headlines – a reflection of the widespread public concern about bureaucratic restrictions on teaching.

The case in point involves a school in the working-class district of Kreuzberg in West Berlin. Five years ago, teachers there introduced a new approach to report writing by addressing their remarks on a pupil's progress directly to the child concerned.

After the Christmas break, this year, all form teachers at the school received a written directive from the local education office, stipulating that reports should contain information "addressed to a third party – usually the parents".

The teachers, backed by parents, demanded an educational justification of the ruling, particularly since addressing in the third person had not been in general use in Germany "since the 1930s period".

The authorities responded with a threat of disciplinary action unless the teachers returned to the standard report writing procedure. Their stance was backed by Berlin's education senator, Frau Hanna-Renate Laurien, in a letter telling the parents that "reports are not a means of personal address to the pupils".

In a bid to circumvent the objection, the teachers applied to have their reports procedure formally classified as a pilot project – a legal formula permitting experimental deviations from normal school practice.

The application was rejected on the grounds that no educational experiment was involved.

Teachers and parents have taken

legal advice and are appealing against the ruling, even though the education office says the matter is not subject to appeal. Parents summed up their dissatisfaction with the statement "education is more than just administration."

It is a sentiment frequently echoed by teachers and yet the Berlin dispute seems likely to join the backlog of similar cases jamming the country's administrative courts.

Education ministers of all parties win plaudits whenever they pledge to cut back the jungle of administrative rulings on school practice – and opposition politicians constantly re-gale them with their failure to do so.

North Rhine-Westphalia, the country's most populous state, has a compendium of rules "as big as the Bonn telephone directory," according to Herr Wolfgang Novak, a senior official in the regional education ministry, who complains that common sense doesn't exist in school administration "unless the courts say so."

The country's largest teacher union, the *Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft*, is also concerned at what it sees as mounting strictures on teaching freedom and creativity. Last year, the union launched a campaign to persuade regional ministries to weed out unnecessary regulations, which often arise from isolated disputes, but are then given the power of law throughout a federal state.

The problem is rooted in the right of all West German citizens to challenge any administrative decision in the courts. From this comes a tendency for education authorities to be stifled by administrators versed in law rather than education. The result is a spiral of litigation, where, again, lawyers effectively decide what standard classroom practice should be.

When teachers, like those in Kreuzberg, adopt approaches specific to the "patch", to meet what they see as their pupils' needs, they are all too likely to run foul of the law.

Terror threat prompts new insurance

SRI LANKA

A new insurance scheme for Sri Lankan schoolchildren has been launched by the Ministry of Education and the Insurance Corporation of Sri Lanka in the wake of terrorist threats to schools.

Initially, the scheme covers two leading schools in Colombo, a boys' Ananda College, and a girls' Visakha school. But Mr S Weerawanni, the acting Minister of Education, has said the scheme could cover schools island-wide within the next fortnight.

The scheme offers cover for loss of life, slight or hospitalization from two to 16 weeks. The monthly premium payable per child is Rs10 (25p approx).

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Educational Services is reported to have arranged classes for children in refugee camps. An estimated 20,000 schoolchildren in 120 refugee camps in 10 districts have been deprived of educational facilities since having taken refuge from terrorist attacks.

The arrangement is expected to continue till schools in the affected areas can reopen.

Any available teachers in these areas are to be employed to instruct refugee children. If a sufficient number is not available, suitable persons will be recruited temporarily on an allowance which will be paid out by the Ministry.

Most Colombo schools – particularly girls' schools – report low attendance because parents keep their children at home for fear of terrorist attacks. Not infrequently, schools receive messages that a bomb has been planted, causing panic among parents and children. So far, these messages have been hoaxes.

Schools have been taking security measures.

D B Udalgama

Research body

A new International Academy of Education has been formed to strengthen the contribution of research to solving critical educational problems throughout the world. Its chairman, elected at the Academy's recent first meeting in Oxford, is Professor Torsten Husén of the University of Stockholm and the executive director is Professor T. Neville Postlethwaite of the University of Hamburg (tel 040 4123 3717).

This quick response is partly because MCCIE is championed by a leading Malaysian national newspaper, the *New Straits Times*. Its editor was persuaded to publish a weekly computer supplement last autumn by brothers Mr Derrick Khoo, a journalist, and Mr Dan E, an electrical engineer. They set up a "Computers-In-Education Unit" which now acts as MCCIE's secretariat and publishes a monthly bulletin about its activities.

Over the next few years, the council could become very influential in determining the shape of a computer education policy still in its infancy. The education ministry allocated £100,000 last April for a computer literacy pilot project. This will supply 20 schools with various microcomputers – the Apple II, BBC-Acorn, IBM PC and NIK machine have been chosen – and monitor the success of coursework and teaching methods.

This will lay the groundwork for a fully fledged project starting in 1988 which will involve 1,650 schools throughout the country offering pupils optional O level computer studies.

Helping to press computer button

MALAYSIA

Andrew Tank on the clamour to promote hi-tech classrooms

Teachers are clamouring to take part in a recently formed voluntary organization promoting the educational potential of computers.

The Malaysian Council for Computers-In-Education (MCCIE), formed at the end of March, seeks to act as a catalyst encouraging teachers to regard computers as a helpful tool for use in most subjects. It also aims to help the development of specialized courses in computer studies and computer literacy.

Professor Madya Lee Sau Lan, who chairs the council, says: "MCCIE is dedicated to teachers involved in utilizing computers as an instructional tool. The computer enables better use of a teacher's skills – not spending so long on preparation of classes and devoting more time to individual pupils."

She and other council officials have been swamped with inquiries. Two hundred members have already signed up and meetings have been crowded. Ninety educationists, teachers and computer executives attended the first meeting in Kuala Lumpur, while 200 came to a subsequent one-day seminar at the offshore island of Penang.

Publicity from these events prompted great interest from schools across the South China Sea. One club used its microcomputer to prepare a letter pleading for involvement at the earliest opportunity. It was sent to all MCCIE committee members, with copies to senior civil servants and even the education minister. Another came from Torneo, in neighbouring Indonesia.

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Professor Madya Lee Sau Lan supports computer drive

Thorough therapy

Sir – We have recently returned from the United States in the mistaken belief that our six-year-old daughter, who has a severe, specific speech and language disorder, would receive better provision in England.

In fact, the comparison between what is available in America and what is made available here proves a disgrace to the educational system in this country. In the States, every three-year-old is entitled to a minimum of two weekly visits to the local primary school's full-time speech therapist.

Most cities provide pre-school programmes for these children to attend four to five mornings per week. Once at school, they are entitled to the specialist teaching required for as long as they need it – even into secondary school.

Not only are speech therapists attached to schools as a matter of course, but special teacher/therapist training is provided for teachers working with language-disorder children.

Here, I find that even had our daughter been lucky enough to have been diagnosed at birth, facilities available for her at such a crucial stage are virtually non-existent. Moreover, there is now no teacher training programme anywhere in the country for teachers interested in language disorders. The course established by the Association For All Speech Impaired Children (AFASIC) has had to close because local education authorities failed to second teachers.

Units attached to primary schools for these children have expanded almost entirely as a result of pressure put on I.E.S.s by parents and AFASIC. But there are only half a dozen or so language units attached to secondary schools.

To find this situation in a country which prides itself on caring, responsible attitudes towards all sectors of the community is shocking.

CHERRY OSBORNE
32 Elmwood Orchard
Weymouth
Dorset

Song goes on

Sir – Your report on the recent National Festival of Music for Youth (TES, July 18) referred to the performance of our school and suggested that since we are losing our music specialist at the end of this term "music's prospects of survival look bleak". I take exception to such misinformed comment.

For several years now our music possessor has worked with great energy and enthusiasm to prepare children for the festival and we have all been extremely proud of the success which has been achieved. Her particular talents will be sadly missed.

However, music is an integral part of this school's curriculum, and it is in the majority of infant schools, and while no decision has yet been taken on whether we will participate in future festivals, music in its various forms will continue to be experienced and enjoyed throughout our school.

Music at Hilltop will be alive and kicking, I can assure you!

LARAIN BINGHAM
Headteacher
Hilltop County Infant School
Wickford

Worry words

Sir – Your contributor to "Lingo" (TES, July 11), who commented on hearing worry rhymed with furry can hardly be right in guessing such a usage to have a Scottish origin. There is evidence that 300 or so years ago such pronouncements were common variants in England.

Most speakers of American English have their fur vowel not their cup vowel. Any Englishman who says "worry" today, if free from American influence, must be continuing a local tradition most probably of the north and likeliest of Lancashire.

As a regular listener for changes in usage, I couldn't confirm any suggestion that such pronunciations are on the increase.

J WINDSOR LEWIS
Department of Linguistics and Phonetics
University of Leeds

Engineers are 'proper' and professional

Sir – The level of understanding about engineers and engineering by those who entered the 1986 TES Engineering Essay Competition (TES, June 27), revealed an interesting and diverse range of views on the profession.

While agreeing with at least some of these – the appeal for more women engineers, for example – we would certainly take issue with those extremists who felt that "it was time 'proper' engineers started regarding themselves as professionals with their own regulatory bodies to which they would be proud to belong".

First, members of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers – both those who have already attained Chartered Engineer status and those now aspiring to reach this standard – would not subscribe to a view that there are "proper" engineers and others. You are either an engineer or you are not. If you are, then you have undergone the rigorous educational, training, responsibility and experience standards set for itself by the profession.

In the case of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, there is every evidence that the achievement of such goals is an objective highly sought after; and that the resulting CEng MIMechE after one's name is an acquisition of which its holders are justly proud. If this were not indeed the case, one would, surely, question why the IMechE should have a membership of 78,000.

The misuse of the term "engineer" – often by those who should know better



A young engineer shows models of two aircraft to pupils at Little Ilford School, east London, in the "Opening Windows on Engineering" scheme.

– is a problem with which the profession has long been burdened, partly through historical reasons and partly because the term is not protected in law. The term "Chartered Engineer", however – available only to those who have met the standards set by the Engineering Council and the Engineering Institutions and registered by the council appropriately – is one now fully understood in those circles which really count most, government, industry and education.

Thanks largely to our own efforts, the message is gradually getting through to a wider public as well. Through such initiatives as IMechE's Teacher Fellowship scheme – in which

teachers have a spell with an industrial firm – and also through the Engineering Council's "Opening Windows on Engineering" scheme – in which young engineers visit schools to talk to teenagers about the excitement and interest of the work they do – the misconceptions are gradually being erased. Hopefully, this will be reflected in the views expressed by future entrants to your essay competition.

ALEX MCKAY
Secretary
The Institution of Mechanical Engineers
1 Birdcage Walk
London SW1

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Letters for publication should be kept as brief as possible and typed on one side of the paper only. The Editor reserves the right to cut or amend them.

I do not recall anyone attributing their great achievements to their schools or schoolteachers – and rightly so. Equally I do not recall anyone turning round and thanking the schools when England won the World Cup.

But equally it is totally unreasonable to expect the schools to be the nurseries providing expert coaching and training in an attempt to furnish soccer, rugby, cricket and tennis with world-beaters. That is the responsibility of the federations and associations concerned and it is up to them to get their act together.

Boxing, judo, badminton, bowls and curling are hardly major school sports, but they are sports in which Britain competes at the top level. That is partly a compliment to the people who organize those sports, but mainly it is a compliment to the competitors themselves, and for every world champion there are thousands and perhaps millions who have enjoyed playing probably every bit as much as those world champions. (In fact, judging from what is seen on television, it is the champions who appear to enjoy it least!)

Certainly schools might take some credit for the fact that millions participate every week.

PHILIP MURPHY
200 Huddersfield Road
Salford
Cheshire

Time to step up paddyfield revolution

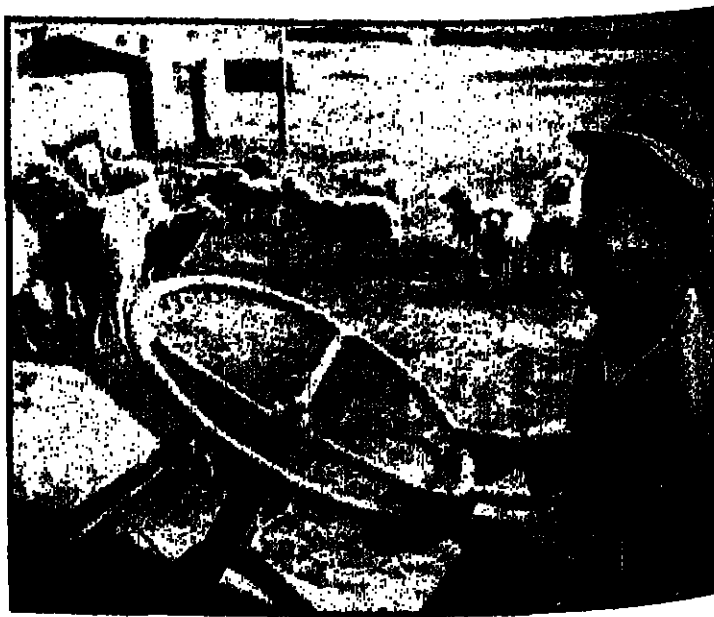
CHINA

Geoffrey Parkins looks at new plans for a more prosperous countryside

China is to intensify its efforts to bring prosperity to the countryside by training 100 million rural young people over the next five years.

The massive training programme aims to introduce science and technology into the countryside by giving every young person one or two occupational skills. Fifty thousand will be trained to the level of technicians, roughly equivalent to the standard achieved in urban upper secondary schools, while the majority will receive "crash courses" in skills appropriate to local industry and agriculture. Priority will be given to youngsters now completing lower or upper middle school education.

Addressing scientists and educators at the Third National Congress of the Chinese Association for Science and Technology (CAST), in Peking, Hu Qili, a high-ranking official of the



Chinese Communist Party's Political Bureau, referred to the large disparities in development across China, and of the persistence of "ignorance and superstition" in backward regions. In some areas peasant farmers still believe that an unprofitable harvest is due more to a god's wrath than their outdated and inadequate methods.

He said that more attention must be given to the development of agriculture, as well as key industries. Agriculture was still the foundation of the Chinese economy and urgently required more appropriately trained workers and the application of modern science and technology, as China made the transition from traditional self-sufficient farming to market-oriented approaches.

The effort to bring science to the countryside began in earnest in 1984, since which time educational, scientific, youth and women's organizations have set up more than 13,000 technical schools and organized around 400 training courses. No fewer than 6 million young rural people have been trained in one or more practical skills over the past two years.

The All-China Women's Federation reports that 20 million of these trained in 1985 were young women, and that this at last is beginning to weaken feudal attitudes on women's role in society. Among younger people it is, at least, the idea that it is not "wrong" or "immoral" for women to work outside the home is beginning to gain acceptance.

Staff must report sex abuse cases

AUSTRALIA

Luis Garcia on a tougher line over child assaults

The Labour Government in New South Wales is stepping up efforts to protect school children from sexual abuse, especially the very young, or those from poor or broken homes.

This follows a recent spate of media reports revealing that the number of sexual abuse cases reported to hospitals and other specialist centres has risen by up to 65 per cent over the past year.

According to a Sydney newspaper, the increase is so dramatic and unexpected that some hospitals cannot cope.

The Government has decided that from 1987 all teachers, other than priests, will be required by law to report any cases of suspected child abuse.

Special provisions have already been made to train the 65,000 full-time teachers in NSW (in both government and independent schools) to detect cases of child abuse.

The teacher unions and parent organizations have now agreed to co-operate fully with the Government.

According to Adrian Ford, of the child protection unit at the children's hospital, in Sydney, the cases range from severe sexual abuse to physically abused babies with fractured limbs and head injuries.

"The upsurge in cases is astonishing," he said. "This year we will see 500 victims of abuse compared with 350 last year – and of these half will be sexual."

Whereas the age of victims seen by his unit used to be eight or nine, they were now aged between four and six. "Detection is earlier," he said, "and there is greater willingness to bring the problem to light."

"Very often the children who come to us at eight or nine have been victims of sexual abuse for many years."

Dr Simon Clarke, staff paediatrician at Westmead Hospital, a large complex in Sydney's outer suburbs, said that his unit expected to see about 500 cases this year. "There is a tremendous shortage of resources to cope with the numbers," he said and a "crying need" for more medical and social work support staff.

The issue of child sexual abuse has only become public in NSW and, indeed, throughout Australia over the past five years, when Labour and Conservative Governments set up special task forces to investigate the problem.

Abolish labels

Sir – It is with incredulity that I read in your leading article "the theoretical basis of the GCSE with its notional spread extending to only 60 per cent of the ability range, leaves a group which the pre-vocational courses and exams hope to fill" (TES, July 18).

Paragraph nine of the general criteria for GCSE states quite clearly "O level and CSE, taken together, were originally designed for the upper 60 per cent of the ability range by subject. GCSE is NOT to be limited in that way." Even under the current arrangements the 60 per cent relates to individual subjects and not the age group.

At the time of the Beloe Report, with the majority of children leaving school at 15, such an arbitrary target, lacking any theoretical justification, was no problem. Since the raising of the school leaving age, over 90 per cent of our young people are assessed for certification through GCSE and CSE.

GCSE is not designed for any particular proportion of the ability range but for all candidates, whatever their ability relative to other candidates, who are able to reach the standards required for the award of particular grades. With techniques of assessment now designed to enable candidates to show what they can do rather than what they cannot do, to name but one element of the new examination, there is every reason to hope that we can eradicate the labelling of over one-third of our children in this derogatory fashion.

Our national resources, of which young people are the most fundamental, need appreciation and enhancement rather than the converse as has been the fashion for far too long.

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Double slice of the real world



Lindsey Darking reports on a learning-by-doing project adopted by 400 schools

The Hampshire Business and Information Studies Project, now in its second year of operation, is a working example of the integrated, student-centred approach to learning recommended for the CPVE, BTEC, CGLI and TVEI. Abandoning the traditional "chalk and talk" seems to have benefited both teachers and pupils in the 120 schools participating across the country, and the project's popularity is spreading rapidly.

It will run in more than 400 schools country-wide in September 1986, and interest has been expressed from such faraway places as Hong Kong, Germany and Australia. A national curriculum development centre for Business and Information Studies has just been set up in Southampton, funded by the Manpower Services Commission, and the training of groups of regional consultants for schools outside Hampshire has also been organized.

The project only started in 1982, when Hampshire's business studies adviser, Ben Kelsey, became dissatisfied with the narrowness of old-style courses, where commerce, office-practice, and secretarial subjects were taught separately from each other, and in isolation from the "real" world of work.

With representatives from schools, colleges and local authorities, he brought together a team, which, over a series of conferences and residential courses lasting a year, produced a basic course pack of materials and assignments. And to encourage traditional commerce and secretarial teachers, who might be reluctant to embark upon new schemes involving wordprocessing and computing, a supporting network of advisory teachers and consultants was built up.

Judith Capel was a secretarial teacher for 16 years and head of business studies at Neville Lovett School, Fareham, before becoming involved in the scheme, and is now the project's full time advisory teacher.

She admits to "sitting on the fence" in the beginning. "I don't like change—I was involved in the in-service training but not fully committed, though I knew that changes were inevitable. But seven to eight weeks into the course, I was totally into it. Everything about it was right."

"One of the best things is that the class is a team. Pupils and teachers get closer because the teacher is moving around the class and working

with them. There is positive change in the children too, even from quite early on. They become responsible, articulate and highly motivated. They relate well to other people, such as visitors, and start to discuss with each other without even noticing that they are doing it.

"The class atmosphere is pleasant, and it feels right as soon as you walk in. There's no way I would go back to what I was doing before."

John Hester, Neville Lovett's headteacher, has also noticed the change in pupils' behaviour, and says that the project has been particularly effective with persistent truants.

"Because the course is enjoyable, and includes a whole range of outside activities, such children are won over, and peer group pressures are very effective against anyone who does not pull their weight in the groupwork," he says.

The project is a double option subject in the curriculum for 14 to 16-year-olds where the new technologies—word and data processing and spreadsheet analysis using BBC micros are used as an essential part of fact-finding and storage, rather than being taught as separate skills.

Economic and business awareness is developed hand in hand with communications and numeracy, through the use of tightly integrated in-course assignments and the setting up of mini-companies and business simulations, and these also test and develop skills such as problem-solving and decision-making, and raise levels of economic and business awareness.

Personal and social skills, for example, the ability to work in groups, public speaking and so on, are developed through group-work projects such as field studies, mini market-research surveys, and presentations, and the pupils also go on work experience and visit local firms and organizations. In all these varied activities, responsibility for group organization and planning, and information-gathering and processing, lies with the pupils themselves, and the teacher takes on the role of adviser in a simulated business environment.

The assessment is divided equally between the in-course assignments and a final case-study, and is designed to test students of all abilities in a broad range of skills. Each pupil has a personal profile with positive scaling, which is negotiated between teachers, pupils and employers throughout the course. The Southern Regional Examin-

ing Board and Associated Examiners Board have given double accreditation in Business and Information Studies for GCE and CSE, and the course has SEC approval for GCSE. Hampshire have used the course as part of their successful TVEI and CPVE submissions, and it has BTEC recognition.



Word and data processing are used rather than just taught.

ing Board and Associated Examiners Board have given double accreditation in Business and Information Studies for GCE and CSE, and the course has SEC approval for GCSE. Hampshire have used the course as part of their successful TVEI and CPVE submissions, and it has BTEC recognition.

Fourth year pupils I spoke to at Neville Lovett school, liked the course because they could be independent, and control their own work.

"This is a totally different course altogether. Some teachers talk down to you and never give you respect, but here we are treated at the teacher's level."

"We feel more grown up and important."

"Doing presentations and talking to the public is useful for the future, and it has made us behave differently outside the course too."

Others saw some of the drawbacks: nerves about public speaking; and the difficulties finding information for themselves; and the rush to finish all the course tasks in the time allotted.

Angela, a fourth-year at Porchester School, thought the course had made her more self-confident. "We find out for ourselves and choose

what to do. It's much more enjoyable."

Classmates Mark and Darren agreed: "Before we started the course, we expected to be able to 'skive' but it's very hard work, and we don't muck about," they say.

After what Judith Capel terms "the most pleasurable parents' evening ever", three short courses in wordprocessing for parents have been set up by popular demand.

Visiting employers have remarked on the pupils' improved skills in teamwork and handling people, and their confidence in interviews. The pupils have also been known to correct visiting "advisers" if they become too directive, because "it is not done that way in this lesson."

Staff in other departments, however, sometimes resent the resources that go towards the project and other subject teachers have in some cases found their teaching methods criticized by pupils who have learnt that it can be done differently.

The traditional image of secretarial courses means there is a shortage of boys. But Judith Capel says that "word gets round". More boys are being gradually attracted to the course, and boys now represent 40 per cent of the total.

"Other boys saw the typewriters and teased us at first, but now they wish they could do it," said one.

The double option requirement also means that higher ability pupils who need specific subject combinations may not be able to do the course, and this could threaten its mixed ability basis, which is seen as vital.

According to Ben Kelsey, "Higher ability children learn that there is not always a right answer in problem-solving exercises, and lower ability children discover that they may have other talents, such as good organizing ability or public-speaking skills, which gives them confidence."

It also takes time for some teachers to adapt to the new style of teaching, according to Judith Capel.

"The teacher has to learn to stand back. When you have taught for years and have to change everything, it is frightening at first. The room is set out differently and you are no longer the source of all information. Old handouts and books have to go completely, and it undermines your confidence at the beginning."

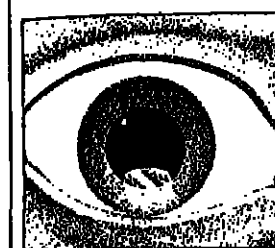
Teaching undergoes a change from performing to organizing, with detailed preparation and efficient managing of the group-work being essential to the project's success. "The course works best with good organizers rather than good actors," says Ben Kelsey. "Actors have more problems in adjusting to the student-centred approach."

The project is running summer schools for teachers wishing to start the course, and a £1,000 grant from the Department of Trade and Industry is available to schools beginning the project. Further information, and course materials, can be obtained from The Business and Information Studies Curriculum Development Centre, Exford Avenue, Havant, Southampton.



Social skills are learnt out of school. Employers remark on pupils' confidence and teamwork.

Visual abuse



Margaret Underwood comes face to face with the reality of video violence

I read with interest the various articles and statistics on that new child pastime—the video nasty—and was shocked at its apparent frequency. But as head of special needs, in a middle school in a quiet and civilized corner of Suffolk I imagined the disquieting percentages were not general, but attributable to massive addiction in inner city schools. I reckoned our contribution to be minimal and could have pointed a finger at the few from whom it probably came.

My first shock came when one 12-year-old, diagnosed as educationally sub-normal, but struggling one-to-one with me and very keen to write stories, asked me how to spell "chainsaw". Such an unlikely word jolted my memory. I asked him what his story was to be about, and withstood a garbled version of *The Chainsaw Massacre*, which he had seen on video.

He told me he sees films such as this on a Saturday morning, when he visits his Dad at Nan's—the weekly access treat. Why Saturday morning? His Dad won't let him watch at night because it gives him nightmares.

It nagged at me intermittently during successive days and often in the night. He is not part of a percentage. He is a child I know well, whose mind is particularly immature and susceptible.

He watches the video with an intensity of concentration that is denied to any of my good ideas. However, he is a one-off, even in my classes, and I naively accepted his experience as such.

It was a full term before the truth—published when enough—penetrated. A whole class, this time of 10 to 11-year-olds, was obligingly keen to write after listening to an innocent enough story about Orcs and Dragons. I was asked how to spell "blood".

"What do you want to say?" "The blood spurted out of his ears and eye sockets"; a really vivid sentence by our standards, but I was now alert. Yes, he had got his idea from a video.

By what I hoped was casual questioning, I then discovered that of those 17 children, no less than 15 watched video horrors regularly, and of those only two watched without parental knowledge "round Barry's".

All the remaining sat and watched with parents, or with parents in the house having set up the video for them. I deliberately kept the discussion low-key for it was dramatic enough for me without further embellishment on their parts. The comments were illuminating:

"My Mum doesn't like me watching really, but she lets me. I cover up my eyes at the bad bits."

"We watched *The Gremlins*, but Mum says she likes it more gory than that. She likes the ones with lots of blood."

"Only Mum and us (the children) watch, because Dad only likes cowboys."

"My mum lets me watch in bed when she goes out, but she lets me keep the light on all night too."

"I did have a nightmare once but I don't usually."

Some of this was reported home, for the next day one girl volunteered the information that her

Mum had told her she'd better not write about the films at school; another that it was all right to watch, but don't tell the teacher.

From time to time another lurid tale emerges with bizarre spelling in a laboured hand, but characterized by unusual liveliness. I envy the effect of the stimulus, but feel sick at heart. These are Mums and Dads I know; pleasant, interested in their children, anxious about their spelling and reading problems and generally co-operative.

Suddenly I don't know them at all. Their thinking is totally beyond my comprehension. They would be distraught if anyone should physically harm their children, and yet they are guilty of the most appalling abuse.

I know that most of the films are violent, some overtly sexual, and some sexually violent. We are all being warned to watch for the child sexually abused on his or her home ground. Where does this invidious indoctrination of violence and perversity rank?

Maybe the percentage of views in one particular special needs class is not typical, but that is irrelevant. One child matters. Those I teach are not yet into puberty, and yet they have visual experience of scenes meant to excite in their cruelty and perversion.

I cannot believe that all of them will emerge unscathed as they struggle with adolescence and their own discovered sexuality. How many are harmed will never be surely known. And when

these thrills thrill no more, what is to be the next stimulation?

I have been assured casually: "Kids grow out of it—like glue-sniffing." What of those who don't? And what of those albeit a minority, so influenced that their personal lives and talents are affected? Can they, as they suffer the misery of inadequate relationships, and worse, the inner misery of a warped mind, claim abuse in childhood as their defence?

Child incest, we are told, is far more prevalent than at first imagined. The numbers must fall into second place compared with those children for whom watching rape and cruelty may be weekly entertainment. Who can say that one is more harmful than the other? And yet, I am certain that these parents I know, who watch with their children, are sickened and outraged by the press reports of crimes against children.

My belated reaction is because I now identify the statistics as small ingenious children enjoying their *Look and Read* series, pleased with their art and craft work and proud of their contributions to the wall display. When one said to me before beginning another story, "It's all right, I'll leave out the yucky bits," I didn't know what to think. She was considering my sensitivity. I do feel totally inadequate; and because this abuse takes place in the home, I cannot see any answers.

Margaret Underwood teaches at Stoke-by-Nayland Middle School, Suffolk.



GCSE in Wonderland

How has the new 16 plus fared when not blighted by the industrial dispute? Virginia Makins investigates

The place to judge whether the planning and preparation for the GCSE were adequate is not the troubled maintained sector, but the top end of the independent school market. In well-funded private schools, everything has gone exactly as planned.

In-service training went ahead with the minimum disruption to pupils—some governing bodies even paid teachers to do it in the holidays. Staff and departmental meetings carried on normally, and extra ones could be programmed in. Teachers have no worries about resources and textbooks—once they decide what they need, they can go ahead and order it.

And with generally well behaved and motivated pupils, the teaching style of the Open University videos—with teachers spending long sessions with individual pupils while the rest dutifully get on with their work—seems more of a practical possibility.

Even so, the message from teachers in two very different independent day schools was that the introduction of the new exam was much too rushed, in a way that may jeopardize the many good aspects of the GCSE.

Teachers in all subjects liked the general thrust

of the new criteria—but they were unhappy about the way some of the exam boards were interpreting them. And there were considerable worries about aspects of assessment.

At King Edward VI High School for Girls in Birmingham—a highly selective school that went independent when the direct grant was abolished—the head, Miss Ena Evans, said: "It was clear there would not be enough time from the moment the announcement about the GCSE was made."

As it was, there had been a "tremendous workload" on staff trying to master the detail of the syllabuses and to make choices at the busiest time of the year. "Last time we had a syllabus change, we were given two years between receiving the syllabus and starting to teach it," said a teacher. "We had time to discuss ideas and try things out."

In general, the new GCSE courses were popular. "The approach will make sense of the way we teach the present syllabus, with more about skills and less factual material," said Miss Diana Jackson, head of history.

"It will make us go back to our Cert Ed training, make us plan carefully, go through each stage, rethink everything—a very useful exercise," said Mrs Corrin Flint, head of geography.

But several teachers thought there was "too much in the syllabuses, with not enough time for little by-laws," as Mrs Flint put it. The historians were worried that the new exam severely reduced student choice. "One of the reasons they enjoy the O level course is that they can each choose their topic," said Miss Jackson.

"The syllabus content for physics is packed full," said Mr Brian Wood, head of science. "It's all very well to have those nice ideas about electronics and engineering, but they've got to tell

us what to leave out. I'd like more space for practical applications—such as how a fridge works."

But he, and the head of chemistry, Mrs Daphne Stoddard, were pleased about the practical component in the new exam. "They're going to emerge much more practically competent," said Miss Stoddard.

At King Alfred's in London, a small co-educational school with 450 pupils aged four to 18, representing a comprehensive spread of academic ability, the head, Mr Francis Moran, said the worst thing about the rushed introduction of the GCSE was that "the DES has put off the single big change—criterion referencing is now out of synch with the new exam."

Otherwise, he wasn't too worried. "There's nothing in the criteria that is likely to cause intellectual difficulties. The problems are organizational ones, and we've effectively got until Easter to sort them out."

Mr Moran believed that, whether ultimately the changes proved good or bad, they were "acting as a tin opener on people's minds", and forcing changes in teaching methods.

At King Alfred's, the secondary-age students are taught in small, mixed-ability groups. In science, there are normally no more than 14 in a group. Even so, the science teachers were worried about how they would assess students without setting up "mini practical exams".

"The assessment procedures are too bureaucratic, and will cut down on teaching time," said Mr John Peasley, head of science. "If we can't assess kids in a normal teaching situation it's just not worth it."

He regretted that the syllabuses he had seen for physics were much more cautious than the

criteria, specifying too much content, and going for the minimum practical component of 20 per cent. "The rush to produce the syllabuses has a lot to do with their faults," he believes.

Scientists in both the schools were finding it almost impossible to devise assessment tasks that clearly disentangled different criteria, particularly lower-level ones such as manipulation of equipment and following instructions from higher-order ones such as observation. "It's even difficult here, when we know the kids extraordinarily well—much better than we would in a bigger school, teaching several groups a week," said Mr Peasley.

Mr Joe Keating, a chemistry teacher at King Alfred's, said that on his Phase Two training course "we all agreed that impression marking over the whole range of criteria would produce better and less time-wasting results."

Opinions of the training courses varied a lot from subject to subject—on several, the teachers did not think the course leaders knew much more than they did themselves, and wasted a lot of time on generalities. One course had broken up early in general dissatisfaction.

"But even if no one had turned up, it was an incentive to read the booklets, mug up the criteria and watch the videos," said one teacher.

There seemed no question that in both schools, the GCSE would go ahead smoothly. "If we didn't have the resources, like some of the science teachers in state schools we met on the course, it would be a different story," said a scientist.

But all the teachers saw a serious danger that the rushed-through syllabuses, which often did not do justice to the criteria, would now be set in concrete for years to come. "I do hope the thing will go on evolving," said Miss Evans.



Hand: 1985 ECHENHART ME Blvd. Darden Green, Summerville, Kent TN32 19

Booth has lived in Japan since 1970 and speaks good Japanese, but is so evidently foreign to those he meets as to be in Leytonstone. More so, perhaps, among people who are unused to Japanese-speaking Europeans and, on more than one occasion, refuse blankly to accept the evidence of their ears: one driver, among many of whose crew he offered a lift, attempting to communicate in English, had to be told by his passenger that the *gaijin* was speaking Japanese and even then dismissed the information as "a little stupid!". At Ann after inn, he was told (in Japanese, of course) that there were no rooms, and if there were, he would not be able to eat the raw fish, use chopsticks or understand the language. The more bizarre of these encounters and the author's reactions to them show what it means to go through the door marked "Aliens".

Luckily, I had a sense of humour and a deep affection for people, although both are strained to the limit by the taunting of children or the inhospitality of innkeepers. He also meets, and records, instances of genuine hospitality and generosity: not the grudging offers of lifts from drivers to the elderly, crazy pedestrian, but kindness that transcends preconceptions about the behaviour of aliens. His thoughts on reading Hiroshima are also worth considering.

Booth's journey missed out Kochi, the setting for Tomie Ohara's novel, first published in 1960 and based on the life of a woman confined for 40 years to a room, arrested in the 17th century as a result of her father's loss of political influence. Translated by Kazuko Furumitsu and Janet Smith, it gives a insight into the closed society of feudal Japan.



Wilson Harris, Caribbean novelist



Ben Okri, Nigerian novelist

Silence is never an option

Kenny Mathieson on the recent Commonwealth Writers Conference in Edinburgh and, below, Edward Blishen on a related two-day festival at the ICA

As it turned out, Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* extended its Yeatsian resonance to include the Commonwealth Games, actively disintegrating as the Commonwealth Writers Conference sat in Edinburgh, and possibly to the Commonwealth itself. The Writers Conference added its collective voice to the mounting protest over the British Government's perceived intransigence over South Africa, with Achebe himself heading half a dozen eminent writers who joined the boycott, while those who came unanimously joined in the chorus of dissent, culminating in a call to the Government to withdraw from the Commonwealth they refuse to support.

If the political events inevitably dominated what was otherwise a successful gathering, they served to underline that, in a literary sense, the Commonwealth is little more than a "banner of convenience" under which a large, multi-cultural and none too happy family carries on its diverse workings. Nigerian writer Ben Okri read a statement prepared with countryman Adewale Maja Pearce deploring Western support for apartheid, in the course of which he noted that "what was begun as a cultural event has necessarily become a political issue": if that is a fitting epitaph for the Conference, it also marks a crucial linkage in African fiction.

The Conference marked the re-issue of Heinemann's redesigned African Writers Series, including two of the best known works from that continent, Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and *A Grain of Wheat*, by Ngugi wa Thiong'o, both of whom joined the boycott. It followed the launch in June of Longman's new African Classics at the Commonwealth Institute; with the Book Marketing Council's "instant response" promotion of books on South Africa, it all adds up to a high profile summer for African writing as well as for

African politics.

African fiction, as befits an enormous and varied continent, cannot be easily subsumed within overall definitions, but has as its hallmark an insistence upon the link between literature and politics which has been largely a side issue in the English tradition, where aesthetics rather than politics has generally been the handmaiden of the social and personal. This has been less true among the minority nations in the UK, perhaps symptomatic of their own "colonial" status; Bernard MacLaverty made the point forcefully in Edinburgh when describing an Irish writer disregarding the Troubles as being like "living in a room with an elephant and trying to ignore it".

The dozen titles issued under these two imprints illustrate varying degrees of this commitment, while also plotting a rough course over the broad development of African fiction. The novel *Emme*, of course, as a received colonial form, taken up in a culture which had always placed great stress on story-telling in the oral form; the old tribal folk-tales and the tradition of the *griots* is directly reflected in D T Niane's *Sundiata* (AC) and Birago Diop's *Tales of Amadou Koumba* (AC), but finds its way into the more modern fiction of Achebe and Ngugi in other forms.

These writers may represent another stage of African writing, preoccupied as they are in these books with the clash between the old tribal ways and the arrival of the new colonial order. Achebe's cool, distanced prose examines that conflict in its 19th-century origins, while Ngugi's novel, set in pre-independence Kenya, reveals that the passing of a century served largely to leave the two sides pondering each other across an unbridgeable gap of incomprehension. The strong sense of the old tribal practices and superstitions continuing to exert a profound

influence is also evident in Elechi Amadi's *Stranger in Paradise* (AWS), which shares with Isidore Okpewho's *The Last Duty* (AC) an exploration of the effects of the bloody Nigerian Civil War – a reminder that oppression need not involve the old colonial protagonists.

If both Achebe and Ngugi seem to have lost faith in fiction, turning to poetry and plays respectively, Amadi's belief that it is a universal form which Africans must – in a curious reverse colonization – embrace for themselves has been widely heeded (the Heinemann series alone now boasts over 300 titles), and by women writers as enthusiastically as men. They are represented here by Mariama Ba's *Scarlet Song* (AC) and South African writer Bessie Head's marvellous *A Question of Power* (AWS), a chronicle of mental illness which, while never forgetting the pervasive political shadow, reveals African fiction beginning to step beyond the boundaries of the old colonial relationships.

South African writers figure strongly in these lists, with Njabulo S Ndebele's *Footprints* (AC) and an anthology edited by Mbuliso Mzamane, *Hungry Flames* (AC), as well as Nelson Mandela's collected non-fiction *No Easy Walk to Freedom* (AWS) and the late Alex La Guma's powerful, Hemingwayesque stories in *A Walk in the Night* (AWS). If any reminder was needed after a conference dominated by the topic, they provide tangible evidence of that country's human and political abuses. If writers have little direct influence in the political sphere, the Africans none the less felt they must speak out (as many do from prison or exile); the widespread commitment from all the other writers present to add their voices may prove to be the real link in "Commonwealth writing". As Ben Okri pointed out, "silence is never an option for a writer".

While she was undoubtedly a skilled storyteller, Blyton's success was underpinned by a consistently high output and astute marketing. By the 1940s, when her first full length stories were published, she could insist – despite national paper shortages – that most of her publishing contracts would guarantee a minimum first printing of 25,000 copies. With an eye to book illustration of books covers – including special editions – stating: "If you have an attractive picture underneath the title the child will immediately catch the eye of the child." On visiting New York in 1948 she sought her American agent on the grounds that she could market her own books more efficiently. Blyton's attitude to marketing was by no means new. Two hundred years earlier John Newbery, "The Father of Children's Literature", had been equally astute in promoting his books for children. The first editions of *A Little Pretty Pocket Book* (1744) were sold with the gift of a ball of pincushion – and all of Newbery's books were fitted from energetic advertising. "The books are given away – only the binding is to be paid for" was his famous slogan.

Today's young readers may not have to contend with Newbery's blatant advertising – but Blyton's monolithic grasp of the market – but they need instead to survive in a world which can be so much more complex. Teachers and librarians appreciate that so much of the resources, organization or display may be effective if they know neither the books they might be dealing with, nor the interests of their would-be readers. One product of this condition is the study of children's literature has acquired a respectability of its own. It is time, surely, that this subject is taken into the classroom where it belongs.

"My life has been like a fairy tale" wrote Hans Christian Andersen. The son of a poor shoemaker and an illiterate washer woman, Andersen's life was as fascinating as any of the stories he wrote. Every young at heart, he would surely have agreed that for children the teller can be as important as the tale.

Edward Blishen

The tale and the teller

When Robert Louis Stevenson went to live on Samoa, the man who had conceived *Treasure Island* as an entertainment for his stepson found his own treasure island for the latter years of his life. The natives there called him "Tusitola" – Teller of Tales. Such a tale as this must seem far-fetched to children today. The romance and excitement in Stevenson's life and work is not only remote from our lives – but is a long way from the experience of many young readers.

The concentration of effort into acquiring reading skills must suggest to many children that, at best, reading is a necessary chore. Moreover, the transition from graded texts to the wide world of unrestricted reading is a potential danger zone. As surveys, notably Whitehead (1977) have shown, the promised delights of literature entertain a dwindling proportion of older readers.

Children's attitudes to reading pose the classic dilemma for teachers: how do you teach a skill and at the same time nurture an interest, a hobby, a love? The popular classroom response, with its carefully chosen stories and its fun book-related activities rests on a belief that enjoyment is the prime factor in encouraging further reading. So far so good. Book clubs and author visits can give children some understanding of a wider world with its ideas, personalities and processes. At best, though, these measures are only a base from which the individual reader sets out, usually alone, into a book world of bewildering choice. It is this experience which must dislodge any tentative reader from developing any sustained reading habit.

As teachers we should try to give children some understanding of this reading world. How many young readers appreciate the role of the publisher? Do they understand how children's books have developed during the last 200 years or for how many thousands of years people have delighted in the joys of story telling?

Asking why certain books are so well represented in our shops can encourage children to make some early critical comparisons – and to look for alternative choices. Some authors – like Stevenson – cut a romantic figure. Children learn that other writers have been more concerned to boost their position in the book market – they need look no further than Enid Blyton.

While she was undoubtedly a skilled storyteller, Blyton's success was underpinned by a consistently high output and astute marketing. By the 1940s, when her first full length stories were published, she could insist – despite national paper shortages – that most of her publishing contracts would guarantee a minimum first printing of 25,000 copies. With an eye to book illustration of books covers – including special editions – stating: "If you have an attractive picture underneath the title the child will immediately catch the eye of the child." On visiting New York in 1948 she sought her American agent on the grounds that she could market her own books more efficiently.

Blyton's attitude to marketing was by no means new. Two hundred years earlier John Newbery, "The Father of Children's Literature", had been equally astute in promoting his books for children. The first editions of *A Little Pretty Pocket Book* (1744) were sold with the gift of a ball of pincushion – and all of Newbery's books were fitted from energetic advertising. "The books are given away – only the binding is to be paid for" was his famous slogan.

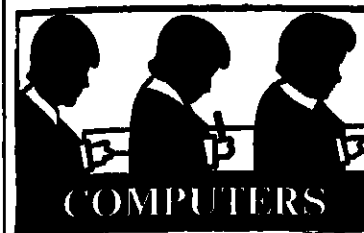
Today's young readers may not have to contend with Newbery's blatant advertising – but Blyton's monolithic grasp of the market – but they need instead to survive in a world which can be so much more complex.

Teachers and librarians appreciate that so much of the resources, organization or display may be effective if they know neither the books they might be dealing with, nor the interests of their would-be readers. One product of this condition is the study of children's literature has acquired a respectability of its own. It is time, surely, that this subject is taken into the classroom where it belongs.

"My life has been like a fairy tale" wrote Hans Christian Andersen. The son of a poor shoemaker and an illiterate washer woman, Andersen's life was as fascinating as any of the stories he wrote. Every young at heart, he would surely have agreed that for children the teller can be as important as the tale.

Jean Hillton

Swell QL



Getting to know your Sinclair QL. By Stephen Morris. Duckworth £7.95. 0 715 61890 3. Illustrating SuperBASIC on the Sinclair QL. By David Alcock. Cambridge University Press £5.95. 0 521 31517 4. Maximise Your QL. By Susan Curran and Ray Currow. Macmillan £8.95. 0 333 38415 6. Word-processing with QL Quill. By David Dempster. Longman £7.95. 0 582 29665 X.

By the time you read this, Sinclair's QL micro, the "Quantum Leap", will be coming up to its second birthday. (Pop corks, folks? – we humans are half our final stature at two...) During the QL's lifetime so far we have seen months of non-supply, then months more of inadequately enthusiastic support from Sinclair, and now a year in which the company has been fighting hard for survival. Despite Sinclair's problems the Spectrum, a year older than the QL, still dominates the British home market (37 per cent against C64's 30 per cent and BBC/Electron's measly 10 per cent).

Indeed the Spectrum rather than the QL remains Sinclair's flagship in the parade of educational micros too – it's very cheap, reliable and well supported by software. Yet the QL too is incredible value, especially since its 50 per cent price cut last year. It is also backed by a full range of peripherals and high-quality serious software packages. Dozens of books have been published on it – some before the micro even appeared; four recent ones typify the range.

The baby introduction is Stephen Morris's *Getting to know your Sinclair QL*; rather superficially, and sometimes clumsily, this provides an overview of system management. The author deals in depth with housekeep-

ing and possible problems, saying little about using SuperBASIC or the four business software packages that come with the micro. While that is a refreshingly different approach, in some ways it leaves an unfulfilled taste – "but what is my micro for?" While Morris's book nicely breaks the ice, we must turn elsewhere for water.

Susan Curran and Ray Currow are a highly experienced couple of writers; their QL book, while pricey, goes into as much depth as anyone would want. It is *Maximise Your QL*, which comes with the breath-taking subtitle "the in-depth user's guide complete with advanced techniques". These authors too have a refreshingly different approach (thus the first two chapters put the QL into historical perspective – excellent, and describe how to use it with a printer – great). In the end they succeed in covering pretty well anything one would want, and do so in a friendly and helpful (yet still thorough) way. The Pison software and SuperBASIC get good treatment as do such matters as networking and graphics.

SuperBASIC (the standard QL programming language) is super (and in my opinion remains unbeaten). It is interesting to find a book about it by Donald Alcock. Alcock is not one of those who churn out computing books out like Mills and Boon romances – his *Illustrating SuperBASIC* is only his third title in a decade. It is in the same unique near-comic-book style as his earlier classics on BASIC and Fortran; a joy to hold, to flip through, to read. But don't be fooled by the comic-book style: this is not a superficial skim-worthy book, but one that expects the user to learn through solid study.

Also, that last is also true of David Dempster's *Word-processing with QL Quill* (Quill being the QL's word-processing package). Solid study may be needed to turn a novice in this business into an expert – but I think not: practice, guided by light and cheerful text, is surely better. There are exercises here, some quite nice ones too, but the overall impression is not appealing. Still, the book is a very useful one for reference: over a third of it comprises excellent appendices and index.

Eric Deeson

Logo at large

LOGO on the BBC computer and ACORN Electron. By Graham Field. Macmillan Paperback Library £6.95. 0 333 39566 2.

Computer Science LOGO style (Intermediate Programming). By Brian Harvey. MIT Press £19.95. 0 262 58072 1. Structure and Interpretation of Computer Programs. By Harold Abelson and Gerald Jay Sussman. MIT Press £14.95. 0 262 01077 1. £34.95. 510 36 7.

Universities and polytechnics have a major problem with people who have been seized with computing as it is done in schools. Computer scientists know well that people who have done exciting things with a restricted language find it difficult to give up their beloved language and to begin to appreciate the ideas that newer languages have.

Logo has mostly been seen, particularly by those outside the Logo community, as a language for primary schools, particularly through its turtle drawing facilities. Its designers, however, had a deeper purpose. They wanted to provide a language whose simplicity, regularity and expressive ideas would naturally put powerful ideas into the hands of its users. And, by and large, they succeeded. It is therefore not surprising that computer scientists should try using Logo as a programming vehicle through which the ideas they thought important could be recognized and described.

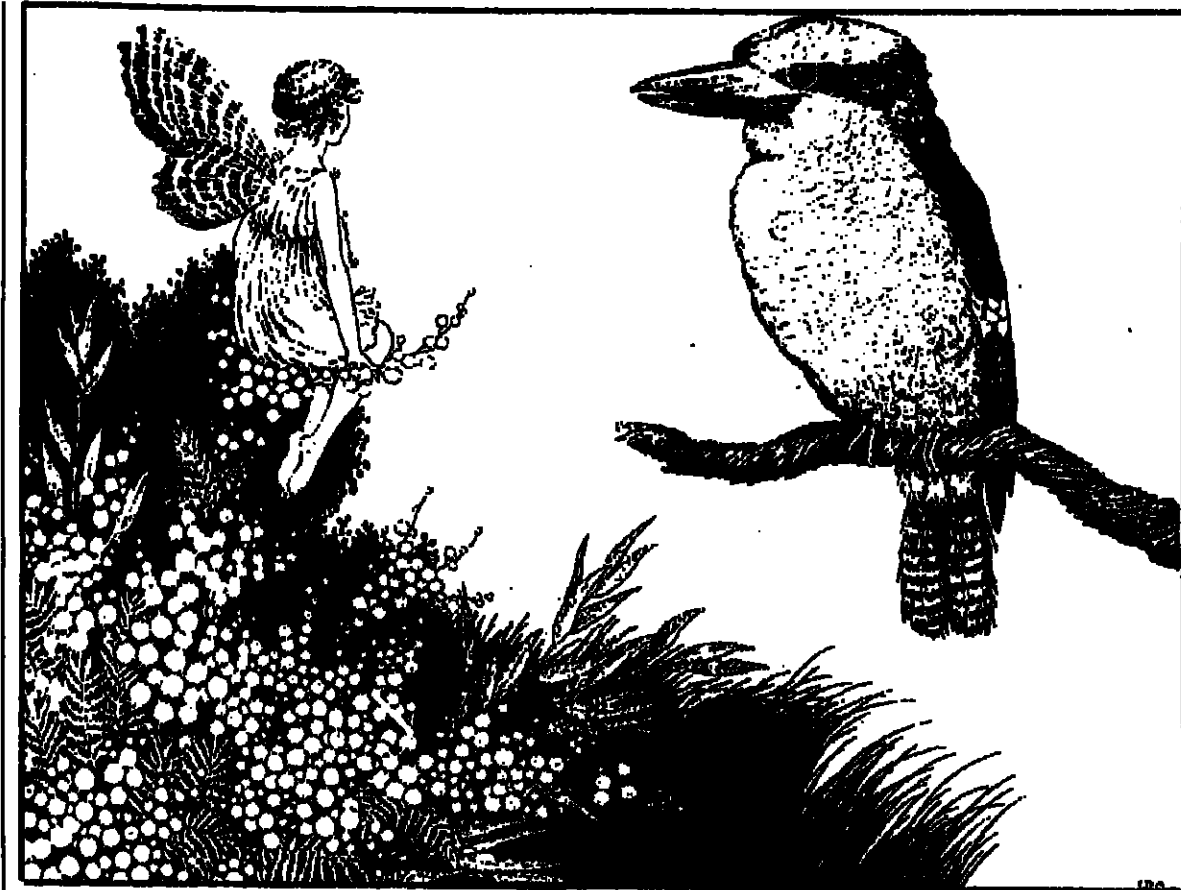
Graham Field has concentrated, rightly, on the list-processing capabilities of Logo, and provides the Acorn-speak vocabulary of command words. However, he does not seem to me to

have moved away from BASIC informing ideas, introducing, for example, the idea of selecting numerically from a list long before showing us how FIRST and BUTFIRST can do all that anyone could want. But his worst fault is that he says "this is what to write to get such and such an effect" without explaining why.

Explaining why is what Brian Harvey's *Computer Science – LOGO Style* is concerned to do, and very well he does it too. He shows clearly the powerful ideas underlying Logo and modern computer languages; he is not afraid to make jokes, or say that he doesn't like some common metaphor. He has four chapters on recursion; combining method; little people method; tracing method; leap of faith method. I think his little people metaphor is, almost, worth the price of the book. He talks good sense about program design and debugging. If this book were less expensive (its printing and production are a joy), I would recommend it without qualification to anyone wanting to go on to higher education in computing.

Abelson and Sussman are deeply involved in the Logo movement. *Structure and Interpretation of Computer Programs* is based on Lisp, not Logo, and is more advanced than pupils at secondary school need. But it can be wholeheartedly recommended to teachers who want a clear exposition of fundamental principles. It fully refutes the argument of those who look down on Lisp as just a list-processing language and claim that important ideas cannot be shown with its use: its discussion of iteration vs recursion on space and time is as good as I have seen anywhere.

John Laski



"While She Sat Chatting to a Kookaburra", one of many decorative pen and ink drawings and watercolours reproduced in a new biography of the Australian artist Ida Rentoul Outhwaite by Marie Muir and Robert Holden. The Fairy World of Ida Rentoul Outhwaite is published on August 7 by A & C Black, £19.95.

Gallimaufries

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Our Best Stories. Edited by Anne Wood and Ann Pilling. Illustrated by Mairi Hedderwick. Hodder Children's Books £5.95. 0 340 35998 6.

The Tall Book of Tall Tales. By Jean Chapman. Illustrated by Deborah N. Bond. Hodder Children's Books £5.95. 0 340 35782 7.

The Johnny Morris Story Book. Illustrated by various artists. BBC £2.95. 0563 21172 5.

Roller-Coaster. By Pamela Oldfield. Illustrated by Linda Birch. Blackie Children's Books £5.95. 0 216 91836 7.

The Wrestling Princess and other stories. By Judy Corbally. Illustrated by Helen Craig. Duckworth £3.95. 0 233 97852 6.

More Stories Julian Tells. By Ann Cameron. Illustrated by Ann Strugnell. Gollancz £5.50. 0 575 03676 1.

Our Best Stories is by way of a celebration of some 20 years of stalwart activity by that splendid organization, The Federation of Children's Book Groups, which has done so much "to open the world of books to children of all ages." For its eighth birthday, incidentally, the publishers have issued a "parents' choice" edited by the same tireless Anne Wood. The present compilers wisely note that children's own choices are too little taken into account: they need the familiar but also require their imagination to be extended into uncharted domains. All these stories have been "tested and co-ordinated by parents and teachers who read them aloud", accompanied by children's comments. The telling, a useful feature of the book, ranges, according to age, from under five to twenty minutes. Every story has been chosen by children, five thousand of them – and what a super choice they've made, too. Among a brilliant array of contributors one may mention Philippa Pearce, Margaret Mahy, Arnold Lobel and Robert Munsch.

Jean Chapman's volume of tall tales, in a format to match its title, is a sparkling gallimaufry of walloping fibs: the further removed from the possible the jollier they get. Mrs Chapman belongs to the breed of born storytellers: it's no wonder the National Book League dabs her the moment she lands here from down under. Apart from Australia, various countries are represented – Italy, Russia, Ireland,

France and Germany. Tales about the dead, fear of the dead or the dupes of pretend ghosts are narrated with a robust raciness and a certain stylish panache. Baron Münchhausen looms large, even putting his name to one of the stories.

The stories in Johnny Morris's compilation were first heard on BBC Schools Radio; his inimitable voice and manner are unmistakably identifiable in his own six contributions. Of the five sections that make up the book, one – People from the Past – tells us about real happenings, including the grim history of the people of Elyan in Derbyshire who were almost completely wiped out by the Great Plague, while another, Our World, provides absorbing information about birds, butterflies and stinging nettles. How prejudice is fomented by ignorance is vividly illustrated in Brian Sibley's "Barriers and Bridges" in the Fables section, which has a tragically topical relevance to contemporary hot and cold wars. And what an enjoyable experience to read Christopher Lillicrap's two school stories: rarely does a writer capture so unerringly the authentic atmosphere of a genuine school.

There is indeed, as the blurb claims, "all the fun of the fair" in Pamela Oldfield's *Roller-Coaster* but since fairs are often traditionally associated with gypsies there might be some eyebrow-raising at her inclusion of a jingle which discourages you from playing with them "in the wood". Still, in a collection which includes such ironies as Joan Aiken's "The Pear Tree" (an exquisitely narrated parable about the corrupt power of wealth), three delicious "Ognash" gems, a Philippa Pearce and an ever-welcome Richard Crompton "William", who can complain?

Judy Corbally makes desperate efforts to create extravagantly comic situations in *The Wrestling Princess*, which should make a strong appeal to those legions of youngsters who adore deliberately corny wisecracks. Most amusing is "The Magic Parrot", more than faintly redolent of *The Iron Man* and *Arab's Raven*. Helen Craig's very funny drawings show enormous versatility.

A generous input of skilful illustrations enhances immeasurably the language narrative of *More Stories Julian Tells*. The episodes, which are pleasantly amusing, convey a warm feeling of family relationships with Dad coming across as a man possessing a shrewd understanding of his kids the jollier they get. Mrs Chapman belongs to the breed of born storytellers: it's no wonder the National Book League dabs her the moment she lands here from down under. Apart from Australia, various countries are represented – Italy, Russia, Ireland,

The facts

Growing up. By Dr James Docherty. Modus books £9.95. 0 948881 00 3. £5.95. 01 1.

Growing up is the first sex education book "to be written under the auspices of the Royal Society of Medicine". *Growing up* "is the first book to use real life photographs – in full colour". So runs the publicity handout, and this combination of authority and (seemingly) daring may appear irresistible. There is, indeed, much to commend here, but there is also a gap between claims and presentation that makes for unease.

Looking for answers to basic questions such as purpose and intended readership, one runs into a trail of inconsistencies. We are told that the book's purpose is to prepare children for adolescence, and that "adolescence starts at about 11". So it is for children aged 10 and below? Not so: it is for 11 to 15-year-olds. It claims "to speak directly to children", yet is subtitled "a guide for children and parents". These are not merely semantic quibbles. A clear sense of audience is needed if content, style and layout are to be right. The impression that the book was planned or designed by the RSM is incorrect: *Growing up* was first published in Nigeria in 1983, stemming from a need for adult books on sex and family planning. Only subsequently did it "come to the notice" of the director of publications at the RSM.

What has this complex history produced? A striking cover, introductory quotations from Cosmo Lang, Archbishop of Canterbury 1928-42, and the 1967 report *Children and their Primary Schools*, a foreword from Lord Roca of Eskdale and a chapter "To your parents", before we're in to 100 pages of closely-packed text, interspersed with coloured photographs and diagrams. Most of the book is given to physical facts about growth, the reproductive organs, conception, pregnancy and birth. The last third covers the "new experiences and responsibilities" puberty brings. The tone is serious and reassuring; the language technical. Wherever practicable illustration is through photographs, often making their point at length. We observe penis and breast size in two dozen people; move from penis relaxed to erect nine times.

The author rightly notes that the text "contains an unusual amount of detailed facts". As such it is valuable as a reference source, but young people on the verge of puberty are likely to find the approach of *What's happening to me?* closer to their needs.

Stephen Corrin

Peggy Hecks

Pop

It's this lack of emotion that is most moving. Gary Oldman is uncannily like



Elvira Madigan had Mozart. Sid and Nancy has "Pretty Vacant" and "Anar-

What the film does do is rescue Sid

Jun Weir

*Sid and Nancy (18), Lumière cinema
St Martin's Lane, et al; script by Alex
Cox and Abbe Wool. Faber £4.95.

Sammy's Magic Garden.
The Latchmere Theatre, Baltersea,
until August 3 (01-228 2620).

Nick Baker

Sammy's Magic Garden can be seen on the Edinburgh Fringe at St Mary's Hall (031-557 4829) from August 8-30.

.....

And keep on shouting it for all
you're worth;
If on the field your swearing's all the

Dowson
Last Test (ph. what a Test!) between

at Skegness; Jane Austen at Monte Carlo; T S Eliot from his chalet at a

School did not disappoint, as a member of the cast acting all the time during the Czech dances with

about soldiers, trails and colouring sheets. A special project, *The Khar-toum Connection*, organized jointly with Ranger's House, will focus on Field Marshal Lord Wolsley and his attempt to rescue General Gordon. All activities are free.

the best entries will be enlarged and displayed in October.

Summer afternoons for children at the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood, London E2, include talks with demonstrations on moving toys (August 5 and 19) and national costume

At Kensington Palace State Apartments the themes are court dress and etiquette on August 18, when there will be replica costumes to try on; Queen Victoria's childhood and accession on August 19; Victorian furniture and fittings on August 20; ceremonial

ber 4-6. There will be a country fair at 'Emmerts Garden, near Sevenoaks from August 16-17 and the Stourhead Show at Stourhead Park will take place on August 10. Full details of other events from the National Trust regional offices.

RESOURCES/SOFTWARE

The software package *Image* is both an inspiring curriculum innovation strategy and an outstanding piece of software design which brings sophisticated graphics within the reach of the least experienced computer users.

Significantly, the software and concept grow from within education rather than from a high profile software company. The designer, Fred Daly, is Head of Computing and Curriculum Development at Homerton. With the help of David Spence, as Chief Art Curriculum Adviser, he began the project in 1982. A working group of teachers, lecturers and art specialists, also participated throughout the development phase of the project. Chris Foreman programmed the material for the BBC, and the project received financial support from the Microelectronics in Education Programme.

Image is much more than a program. The package is sold as two discs together with a comprehensive handbook. The software has been designed to link with lower cost colour printers, digitizers and input devices. The system builds from the two discs to give a micro design rig, with features only previously found on very high cost industrial equipment.

This is not a simple case of envying the power of industrial image systems. Computer graphics as a medium for art in schools must be powerful but easy to use. A key part of *Image*'s strength is its power and versatility combined with exceptional ease.

At Oriel High School we have worked intensively with both the final and development versions of *Image*. The art department has its own BBC, and we were fortunate in gaining access to the rest of the equipment on loan from TVEI. A diverse range of students have been able, not only to experience *Image*, but also to use both a colour printer and a digitizer, ie. all the key elements in the system. Students have shown remarkable dexterity, sustained enthusiasm, and growing awareness of the potential of this area. *Image* is packed with features, but a close description of a few selected program elements and how they work, may indicate its power and ease of use.

The first disc is the program disc. This enables the user to create or manipulate work on the screen. When loaded this shows the drawing area, which reveals a strip of "pop out" menus. A small cross is moved around the screen using either the micro keyboard or a more specialized screen pointer. By pointing and pressing a single button drawings or designs are developed on the screen.

A section of the program called "The Mixing Room", allows the user to mix colours, textures, and create a huge array of patterns for use in the work. Students of all ages and abilities



Images

Mike Chambers on 'the most comprehensive image-processing package yet provided for the BBC micro'

enjoy creating "electronic paint" and "liquid wallpaper", and confidently manage the storage and retrieval of mixes.

Work may be built up involving shapes, lines, patterns, colour and text. Sections of the screen can be repeated, distorted, rotated, re-arranged, scaled up or down, and all with remarkable speed and geometric accuracy.

Video pictures may be processed through a digitizer and may be incorporated in the design. They can also be manipulated with the program features, in much the same way as other images produced by the software.

Work with *Image* can also be animated with a program feature called "Colour Series" which allows the user to change the colour element in the design very quickly. Any colour may be substituted for another from the basic palette of eight.

The mixing and storing of colours greatly increases the colour range, and manipulating the design with this feature gives inspiring results. This pro-

cess may be repeated frequently, which generates a series of visual alternatives, any one of which may be saved. Should the experiments get out of hand, a push of the button returns the design to its original colour scheme.

The sheer power and ease with which students can both experience and produce variations and contrasts in design, must be one of the chief educational advantages of the *Image* system. The process does not involve excessive effort, time or cost.

When students are taught to save their screens, at each phase of the design, their will to explore is not depressed by the fear that their experiments will spoil the work. The ability to make a set of images, which can then be compared and evaluated, may play a key role in the development of visual creativity.

Generally, images are stored on the second disc called "The Sketchbook Disc", but they can be printed on completion. *Image* works with the standard Epson 80 series black and white printer. By far the better choice

for art and design work is one of the colour printers that the software can be set to take. An indication of the quality of work is that it can be hooked into the Poligrain Palette Computer Image Recorder. At £850 this equipment may be within the reach of colleges.

Fortunately for schools "The Sketchbook Disc" does rather more than save work. A simple routine turns the computer rig into a display unit and pages of the book can be shown in slide show sequence. We have used it to display work, as an electronic noticeboard, and to produce animated pages. This feature, although beautifully simple to operate and organise, offers plenty of scope for quick and sophisticated visual communications. There is a consistent need in schools for displays of information, posters and teaching aids.

A focused focus on visual communication may lead to a better balanced course which has a broader content. The skills and experiences gained by students using *Image* may be transferable to other areas of the curriculum. Most art teachers wish to extend the range of media offered and are aware of the broader role of images in the mass media. There is a wide recognition that mass images and visual styling play an important part in children's visual experiences. Frequently there has been a desire to develop ways of working which tackle these areas in an active and practical form, but designing projects which include photography and video are difficult to resource and may offer experiences to only a small number of students. Moreover, to run these can be expensive in terms of time and consumables.

Image offers a unique means of solving some of these problems for art departments. The system gives new forms of camera based image-making where previously there have been little or none. It opens up graphic design as both a means of working and an area of study for all students. Inevitably it will provide new opportunities and insights for specialist activities including textiles, ceramics and silk screen printing.

Fred Daly's handbook which is provided with the discs is superb. He accomplishes the task of providing a comprehensive technical manual for an audience wholly unfamiliar with either computers or manuals. In a section called "Using *Image* in Schools and Elsewhere" the author deals with the background, performance and research implications of the *Image* project. He records that it has already been used in many institutions from primary schools through to colleges.

The major area of the research concerns the role of the computer in visual education. He draws together the range of observations and experiences of teachers working with development versions of *Image* during

its trials. These writings have been published separately as *The Homerton Image Papers*. They provide a balanced view of differing opinions on the importance and value of computers in art and education.

Perhaps of chief concern for secondary art specialists is the section "Using the Computer as Part of a Process". This strategy contains the most practical and profound concept for integrating the computer in art education.

Drawing on the screen can be done easily with some of the sophisticated devices that *Image* supports. However, a versatile technique involves transferring work on paper to the screen via video camera. This method has been used to encourage drawing regardless of apparent ability. The technique also maximises the advantages of drawing on paper with the processing range of the computer.

Painting on a large scale has many benefits. It is physical, lends itself to group collaboration and can give impressive results. From a teaching point of view it can be difficult to start a project and the enlarging process, if required, can be tedious. Work with *Image* can be printed on to plastic and projected on to a surface with an overhead projector. Although *Image* colour is fascinating it can not attempt to compete with the range available to paint. But the range of colour prints can be greatly extended by printing work on to coloured Xerox duplicating paper. Using this technique the permutations will run from hundreds to thousands. There are obviously other ways in which *Image* can relate to either drawing or painting. Ideas, techniques and perceptions develop through experience.

Image costs £45. From Cambridge University Press, Publishing Division, The Edinburgh Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 2RU.

The discs will work with the following models: BBC - B with and without Econet modification, BBC - B+ (64 and 128) with O.S.1.20, Basic I and II and DFS 0.90, BBC - Master 128. Full details of the peripherals and input devices, which extend the system will be found in the handbook.

bits

NETWORK VERSIONS

AVP Computing have announced that network versions are now available for over 100 of their BBC titles. These versions can be used on all the major BBC networks, including Econet and E-net, and are sold with a multi-user licence for the price of two ordinary versions.

Catalogues of network versions of software for primary and secondary schools are available from AVP Computing, Hocker Hill House, Chestow, Gwent, NP6 5ER.



RESEARCH PROJECT

The Council for Education Technology has completed a major survey of UK research and development in the applications of technology in education on behalf of the Department of Education and Science.

The survey of over 200 projects from about 30 UK funding agencies provides a source of detailed information on current work concerning the value of using information technology to support teaching. The register of projects is held as a database at CET. For further information contact The Council for Education Technology, 3 Devonshire Street, London W1N 1BA.

MODERN WORLD HISTORY: Evidence and Empathy
Russian Revolution;
Wall Street;
Presidential Elections;
Escape from Bremerhaven.
Source Books: Price 95p.
The Russian Revolution
American in the Twenties
Roosevelt and the New Deal;
Hitler's Germany;
Hitler's Germany.
BBC Micro Software programs
Price £10.00.
Spartacus Educational, 139 Carden Avenue, Brighton BN1 8NH

The new framework for history courses created by GCSE has naturally provided a fresh incentive for educational publishers. Spartacus are a small, new company inspired by John Timpinkin, who gained his experience with the excellent Tressall firm. They have adopted the package approach to teaching the twentieth century. Their range includes six software programs and ten source books, accompanied by both a teacher's handbook (devoted to the background of the sources) and leaflets on the classroom use of the programs.

The purpose is to enable children to develop skills in effectively using historical evidence and to experience empathy - two central objectives of the National Curriculum. These programs suggest their approach is serious yet enjoyable, though some are more successful than others.

The source books are first class and good value. *The Rise of Hitler* is typical. It is divided into units, each using half a dozen sources, including a picture and occasionally a brief set of

Fresh incentives

James Bromwich reviews a history package

statistics. No quotation is longer than a hundred words and frequently less; most have been carefully edited. All units finish with a set of questions on topics such as the Beer Cellar Putsch, Mein Kampf and Hitler's Personal Life. There is a good mix of contemporary, autobiographical and historical comment. Surprisingly this book and *Hitler's Germany*, rarely draw attention to the difference between primary and secondary sources and rarely make explicit variations in reliability. The two books on America are better in this respect, yet at the same time ask simpler questions of the evidence. It would suggest that the USA should form part of the fourth year work, while Germany - and Russia - should be taught in the fifth.

Computer software operates in a totally different way. Books remain pre-eminent for presenting written evidence, but for empathy a well constructed program can achieve significant effects because of its interactive potential. The difficulty is achieving balance between over-simplification - reducing content to the level of an arcade game, or providing so much

information it reduces user participation to a minimum.

All the programs place users in a specific past situation. *Wall Street* makes them speculate in the 1920s and during the Crash; *Presidential Elections* creates "policy advisers" in the elections of 1932, 36, 40 and 44. In *Russian Revolution*, the Bolshevik user plots the takeover of Petrograd and as a British spy they try to avoid the Gestapo and get the help of the resistance in "Escape from Bremerhaven".

The best are the American programs. Most effective is *Wall Street*. The user is provided with a bank account and instructed to buy and sell shares. Selection is helped by brief summaries of the *Wall Street Journal* and company profit graphs. Every year the computer leads the user's success on the market and offers a widening selection of stock. Success and failure replicates the process, if not the suffering, of the real stock market speculator. It is straightforward and the deeper the knowledge of events, the better the opportunity to hang on to any gains, an incentive to read the Twenties source book carefully!

Presidential Elections is good but not as stimulating. Choosing from four foreign areas, such as tax changes and foreign policy, the adviser produces the Democratic Party programme for each election. It is useful way of learning what was popular in America at the time. Although the graphics of the region by region results are good, and there is a nice victory fanfare after each, four elections take a long time. Unlike *Wall Street* it is probably best used without significant preparation, the user learning the "best" policies through election failure.

A 1938 spy scenario is not enough to make *Escape from Bremerhaven* particularly dramatic. Long sequences of information precede the action, which is laboured with passwords and set responses. Despite references to various events in Nazi history, it covers inadequately the role of the opposition to Hitler before and after 1933. In principle identifying with the Military Revolutionary Committee planning the October Revolution must have seemed attractive. Actually deciding which bridges and buildings to take and when to take them, what Red Guards to move and which regiments to suborn is difficult and is arbitrary without highly detailed knowledge of the events. Is this appropriate or meaningful for this age group?

There are minor criticisms. Colour monitors are essential - Red Guards can otherwise be confused with Kerensky's regiments. Keying is not always consistent. It is confusing to use the same key for a policy change and to move the program forward in *Presidential Elections*. Sound is used minimally. But the programs are refined enough to prevent any serious problems and helpful advice is provided for real classroom situations.

These are interesting, professionally produced packages yet their stress on evidence and empathy raises a problem that is perhaps inherent in the new GCSE approach. Original source material inevitably causes language difficulties. No editing will ever make original sources easy to absorb by poor readers; even these source books include words like "domain" and "corollary". Perhaps in a few years we shall see if the new examination has reduced the numbers able to succeed at 16.

RESOURCES

Face savers

Victoria Neumark visits an exhibition of 'fashions in faces 1700-1886'

Let's Face It
Museum of London
Until September 28
Admission free.

Is there any more fascinating object than a human face? Taking as their theme "fashions in faces 1700-1886", the Museum of London has imaginatively excavated its collections to build up not just a procession of aids to beauty but a kaleidoscope of the faces which passing centuries have thrown up.

The famous of today and yesterday leer from the walls as you enter the exhibition and see the skulls of three Londoners from Roman, Saxon and medieval times, each with their comb. With the prevalence of headlice and the absence of effective shampoo until recently, the comb must always have been the first adjunct to beauty.

As you pass from the photo of Mick Jagger to the small gallery of Lely beauties, it is interesting to remark how the actual structure of faces seems to change in each epoch, from wanton-eyed long-nosed Lely lovelies to demure Victorian soulfulness or the haughty elegance of a Gibson girl.

The first section of the exhibition, on the 18th century, makes you profoundly grateful not to have been born in a London where 650,000 people were crowded together in five square miles with no thought of hygiene,

disease lurking in the water supply, and syphilis nibbling away at faces. Grisly faces and skulls are on display, as well as a repellent range of useless optical and dental aids.

If one couldn't clear, then one had to cover the blemishes of malnutrition, vermin and illness (not to mention fallen teeth), and here are the fatal compounds of lead, arsenic and mercury which ladies and dandies pasted over their Dorian Gray-like wages of sin. Here too the odorous perfumes to cover up not having washed for a week, and the cheek-plumpers, false eyebrows and dentures with which to repair the ravages of nature.

The Romantics bring a move to soap and water, bear's grease pomade and more modern spectacles and dentistry. Barbers' shops, shown in some of the prints on display, became a focus of social life, with whiskers symbolizing the Victorian paterfamilias's responsible attitude to business and life and demurely coiled locks all the rage for those "anguid young ladies reclining on sofas". Maceassar oil came in, make-up went out, and little trinkets show how feminine clutter turned to jewels to ornament the modest fair.

Moving in to the later part of the 19th century, the commercial interests of clever men like Pears, Rimmel, Boot et al attacked with vigour the mass markets who wanted pretty pucks, pots and jars and the promise of magic at ninepence a throw. Along with the patent inventions on show

(Gillette blades, electric hair brushes, "chin-rollers") are the Helena Rubinstein secrets-of-Hungary approach and the yen for anything French.

A striking diorama emphasizes how real advances in the beautification of the human face have come about through the horrors of war. A maimed Tommy from the trenches and burnt-out airman from the Second World War flank Bettie Davis sitting before the silver screen on a pile of film cans. In front of her the slick Thirties' packaging of scents and powders, perms and advertising and swivel lipsticks illustrate how ordinary girls' dreams were moulded by the celluloid stars. On either side, advances in plastic surgery for the disfigured.

On through the shortages of war and rationing (Austerity cosmetics) and a revival of home-made remedies, the swinging perms of the Fifties and the swinging locks of the Sixties. Black cosmetics, Mary Quant, computer print-outs and Lady Di jostle us into the present and the "new face" - still brought to you, incidentally by Boots No. 9, and little trinkets show how the actual structure of faces seems to change in each epoch, from wanton-eyed long-nosed Lely lovelies to demure Victorian soulfulness or the haughty elegance of a Gibson girl.

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A special programme of lunchtime lectures, demonstrations, workshops, talks and worksheets will be available in July. An excellent booklet "Let's Face It" is available from the Museum bookshop (95p). For details telephone 01-600 3699, ext 240 or 280.

MEDIA

A role in life

Jean Sargeant reviews Central TV's 'Workout' series

ADULT EDUCATION

Workout
Central TV for the ITV Network
Thursdays 9.30pm.

Have you heard the one about the man who saw someone in the river and jumped in after him? "Don't save me," cried the drowning man, "I want to die."

"I wasn't going to," was the reply. "I just want to find out where you work!" Work Out is not simply a series about unemployment and its consequences - although we are reminded that, alongside a comic's black humour, real life suicides do occur. It deals with the economics and technology behind the loss of traditional manual jobs and examines the increasing employment opportunities in high tech, and other

industries, where a different, usually higher, skill content is required. It reminisces with the retired about work in days of yore (one old lady embroidered gentlemen's socks) and looks to a future, already upon us, where "work" and "leisure" need to be redefined. Some programmes focus on the community's response to this changing pattern of work; curricular initiatives such as TVEI are explored, as is YTS. The labour market role of women, at a time when less than 15 per cent of families conform to the stereotypical "norm" of a male breadwinner supporting a wife and/or children, is also discussed. So, too, is the impact that new technology will have on how and where we work. This "quiet revolution" may, we are told, be an opportunity to find a new role in life; "What now?" need not be a cry of despair.

Many of these topics, and others, are raised in the first, and possibly least satisfactory, of the programmes. Although a voluntary worker points out that work is not the same thing as paid employment, most of us would agree that, "Our work is the story of our lives." Thus, one man describes the satisfaction of making jewellery, another the "thrill" of making steel. Rose-coloured glasses are not obligatory, though: "Industry wasn't that clever," says an ex-foundry man. Albert Finney is shown slogging through Friday in *Saturday Night Sunday Morning*, reminding us how work was, when work was there to be had; his views in stark contrast to those of a monastic potter, symbolically reshaping his clay, who declares that "By work we imitate God".

That a series of such importance is given a good television transmission time, thus making it available to millions of viewers who would not bother to watch a ghetto adult education programme on a similar theme, is to be welcomed. So too are the activities of ITV's community education officers who have worked to organize UK back-up to the series. It is just as well they did, because some of the programmes leave the viewer up in the air. In contrast, the free support booklet, produced in association with the Community Education Development Centre, points the viewer to the help that is at hand. A related National Extension College book, *Your Work in Your Hands*, takes the themes further.

Even more significant in terms of post-programme action - an essential aspect of any series with educational pretensions - has been the involvement of agencies such as Replan and Business in the Community in the build-up to the series. What now exists in every ITV region is a database for viewers who wish to explore a range of possibilities, whether in work or out of it. This localized information and referral service, based on each ITV station, is obviously better in some parts of the country than others. However, at a time of major and bewildering social change, these advisory services, though modest, go a long way towards converting a thorough, but unexceptional, documentary series, into a genuine device for extending learning opportunities.

Craft, design & marketing

CONTINUING EDUCATION
Designers
BBC2
Tuesdays 7.30pm.

Jill Dent appeared in the third programme of this six-part series as that rare creature, the consumer turned designer-businesswoman to satisfy an unquenched demand.

What she wanted was a child's cup with a drinking spout that would open in one position only. Her solution was an adaptation of the system used in Parmesan cheese containers. But no drawing had she presented technical drawings done by an expert in plastic moulding techniques to an interested manufacturer with a small-order outlet, than her bank loan ran out.

Jill Dent turned to Venture Merchants Ltd, a company of small-sum entrepreneurs who provided the management expertise to set up a business in which they had shares. Others, more interested in the viability of their ideas than in their commercial potential, turn to the London Innovation Enterprise, a part of the Greater London Enterprise Board specifically concerned to promote designs that benefit the community and create jobs.

Here, we saw more than lip-service being paid to Paponek's famous dictum that you either make money or make sense. For among the designs shown were musical instruments that could be played by untrained school children and the physically handicapped. The prototypes had been made in

workshops and tested in schools and community education units, but more important still, the Enterprise Board had brought together the institutions that made up the potential market.

Like Jill Dent, Robert Welch learned about marketing the hard way. A professional craftsman and industrial designer since the Fifties, he told us how, in England, it has been very difficult to get manufacturers to accept good design. There were no commissions coming from industry. With the result that despite the existence of trained silversmiths like himself, the Sheffield cutlery industry has shrunk from 40,000 to 2,000 workers over the same period.

Setting consumers against creators made the first programme the liveliest so far. While the manufacturers' side of Leyland's T45 articulated truck aimed at an immediately recognizable, "manly image" and talked about the need to take risks and exercise flair within the economic restraints of sound production methods, the truck drivers, transport planners and controllers gave a unanimous thumbs down.

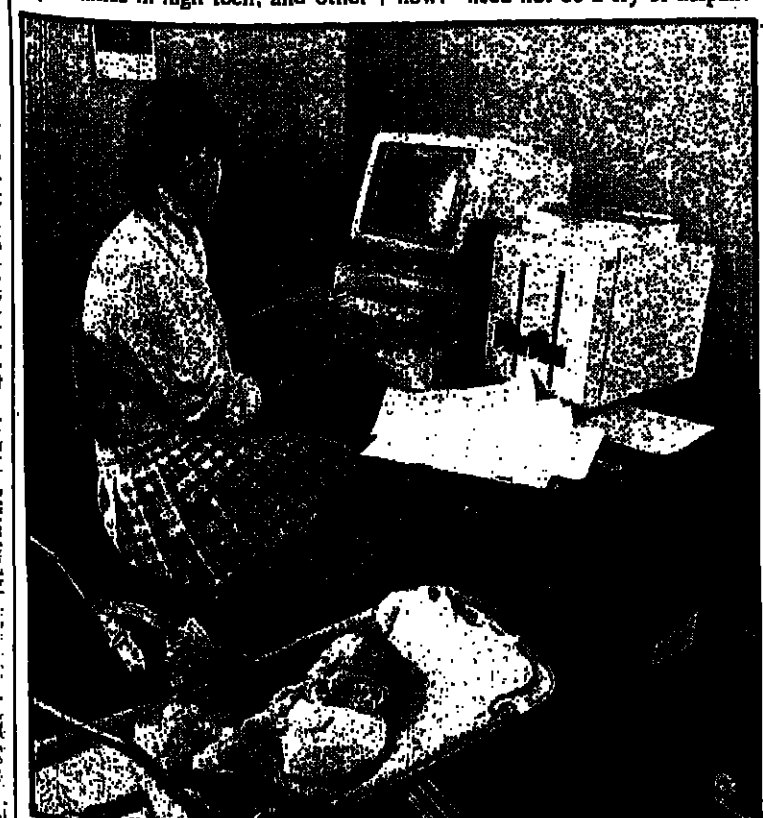
They criticized the slow operation of the gears, the unacceptable noise levels, unsophisticated ventilation and "cheap plastic" trimmings of the cab interior. Fine on motorways, the truck was impossible in towns and villages. The experience of commercial business and manufacturing practice, marketing and consumer research, is precisely what the teacher and student of craft, design and technology lacks. In schools, this may be only a minor matter. In colleges, it could prove fatal. As Robert Welch noted, until recently, most designers were educated in fine art or the crafts. Today, they must transcend the boundaries of the studio and workshop. These programmes could help many future designers do that.

Michael Clarke

4 Titles Available For Recording From Sunday 3 August 1986
Approximate Transmission Times

Sunday 3 August
9.15 People to People: Well you didn't expect us to sit around doing nothing, did you? See Code A.
Monday 4 August
6.00 Pocket Money Programme - Repeat See Code B
10.00 Commodities See Code D
Wednesday 6 August
6.30 Playhouse - Images of the Family - Repeat See Code C
8.00 Blood of the British - Repeat See Code B

Thursday 7 August
8.00 Equinox See Code D
Friday 8 August
3.25 Arts Arts See Code D
Saturday 9 August
6.30 Status of Creativity See Code C
For details of the scheme, and any other information, contact Judith Funnell at: GUILD LICENSING
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